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SCOTT

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL

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EDITED

WITH PREFACE AND NOTES

BY

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Gifted in the Memory of
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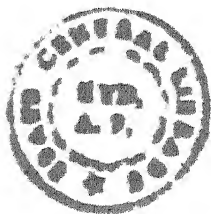
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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

SIR WALTER SCOTT made a great reputation by his metrical romances before he began to write romances in prose, and 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel,' published in 1805, when the author was in his thirty-fourth year, was the first of his metrical romances. It became more immediately and widely popular than any poem ever published before. It came upon the ear of the world like a strain from a long-forgotten instrument suddenly taken up by a natural master, and played with surpassing skill and spontaneous unaffected rapture. It was as if men had all of a sudden, while they were bent soberly over their every-day work, heard a flourish of trumpets and looked up in amazement to see before them a procession of strange and dazzling figures out of the past centuries,—mail-clad knights, courteous squires, hardy yeomen, fair ladies, bowmen, bloodhounds, impish dwarfs and wizards. The novel metre of the 'Lay' added to the charm of the novel matter. It was quick, lively, varied—a contrast to the solemn, majestic, monotonous measures used in the serious poetry of the eighteenth century. To complete the influence of the new poet, it so happened that his countrymen were in circumstances peculiarly disposing them to listen to him. England was then in a heroic mood. Napoleon was thundering at the gates. We were in the heat of a struggle for existence. Branksome Hall, with its warriors keeping watch day and night in complete mail, was a picturesque image of the England of 1805. Circumstances were thus favourable to the Minstrel's advent; but, indeed, a poem so full of fresh and vigorous action, and universally intelligible feeling, must have been popular in any age and any circumstances.

Commentary on a poem so simple, hearty, and energetic is not likely to be read, but, for the sake of the student, one may put together a few notes on its history and disputable points connected with its structure and relations to other literature.

I. THE INCEPTION OF THE POEM.

Scott has given a minute account of his beginnings as a poet, and of the boyish tastes, influences, and accidents that gradually led him on to the composition of the 'Lay.' The story is told with his customary frankness, humour, and absence of pretension in an *Essay on Imitations of the Ancient Ballad*, and an *Introduction to the Lay of the Last Minstrel*, both written in the spring of 1830 for a new edition of his works. Additional details are given in the fragment of autobiography printed at the beginning of Lockhart's 'Life.' The opening chapters of 'Waverley' may also be read to get an idea of Scott's boyhood; the account of Edward Waverley's education and his romantic aspirations is indirectly autobiographic, an idealised reflection of the novelist's own youth. We shall see that even Scott's direct autobiography was coloured by his literary habits and tastes, but I will state first what he tells us about himself, with any comment or amplification that may occur.

Scott definitely ascribes the awakening of his poetical ambition to a chance meeting with 'Monk' Lewis. 'Finding Lewis,' he says, 'in possession of so much reputation, and conceiving that if I fell behind him in poetical powers, I considerably exceeded him in general information, I suddenly took it into my head to attempt the style of poetry by which he had raised himself to fame.'

This was in 1795 or 1796, when Scott was a young man of twenty-four, recently admitted to the Scottish Bar, and not taking very kindly to the profession, although his father was a Writer to the Signet, or solicitor. Up to that time, apart from school exercises in verse, and 'the usual tribute to a mistress's eyebrow,' he had not, he says, 'indulged the wish to couple so much as *love and dove*.' But long before this he had been a devouring reader of poetry and fiction, and especially of ballads and romances. Among lovers of poetry throughout Great Britain a general interest in old ballads had been awakened by the publication of Percy's 'Reliques of Ancient Poetry' in 1765. The ballad was in fashion when Scott was a boy, and nowhere more in fashion than in his native town of Edinburgh, where collection after collection of old and new was published, and

Burns and a host of less celebrated contemporaries raised the taste for simple poetry to something like a passion. Circumstances combined with natural inclination to make Scott a specially ardent reader of ballads. His family belonged to the great ballad-district, the Scottish Borderland. Some of his own ancestors had furnished themes for the ballad-singer. He was the lineal descendant of a Border chief 'Wat' or Walter Scott of Harden, whose wife was celebrated in song as the Flower of Yarrow. (See 'Lay,' Canto iv.) The history of various families of the 'right honourable' clan to which he belonged had been 'gathered out of ancient chronicles, histories, and traditions of our fathers' in the seventeenth century by another Walter Scott, Scott of Satchells, 'an old souldier and no scholler, and one that can write nane, but just the letters of his name.' Scott delighted to think of himself as the descendant of heroes 'of the persuasion and calling of Robin Hood and Little John.' From his earliest days his imagination was fed with stirring tales about the exploits of Border worthies, Wight Willie of Aikwood, Jamie Tellfer of the fair Dodhead, and so forth; and he had contracted such a passion for ballads at the age of thirteen that when Percy's collection first fell in his way, as he tells us himself in his autobiography, he became so absorbed in the book as to forget his dinner. 'The summer day sped onward so fast, that notwithstanding the sharp appetite of thirteen, I forgot the hour of dinner, was sought for with anxiety, and was still found entranced in my intellectual banquet.' When with this keen appetite for romantic story, Scott had devoured all that lay within his reach in English, he learnt French and Italian for the purpose of indulging it still farther, reading through Tressan's romances, the Bibliothèque Bleue, the Bibliothèque de Romans, Dante, Boiardo, and Pulci, and 'fastening like a tiger upon every collection of old songs which chance threw in his way.' Subsequently, his attention being drawn to the new romantic literature of Germany by Henry Mackenzie, author of the *Man of Feeling*, who lectured on the subject in Edinburgh in 1788, he learnt German sufficiently well to read Schiller and Goethe. To this introduction to German literature he attaches great importance in his account of his youthful progress in poetry.

He was thus ready to be awakened to a sense of his own

powers when he met Lewis. 'The Monk' owed much to German influence, and among the most admired parts of the tale were the romantic ballads interspersed through the prose. Accordingly, Scott's first attempts at poetry were translations of German ballads, soon followed by imitations on his own account. Some of these were published in Lewis's 'Tales of Wonder.' Scott published also a translation of Goethe's 'Goetz von Berlichingen.'

The tame reception of these first efforts convinced him that 'the practice of ballad-writing was for the present out of fashion, and that any attempt to revive it, or to found a poetical character upon it, would certainly fail of success.' At the same time his literary ambition was far from being quenched. It had in fact become a settled purpose, and he deliberately resolved to content himself with a moderate income from his profession, relinquishing all effort after honour and eminence in it 'with the hope of making some figure in the field of literature.' He cast about for a suitable vehicle and a suitable subject, and in the meantime busied himself collecting old Border ballads and traditions, unconsciously 'making himself' for what was to be his great work in life.

Chance threw a subject in his way. The young Countess of Dalkeith, wife of the heir apparent to the headship of the clan Scott, had heard the legend of Gilpin Horner—a strange tricky goblin who appeared among the Borderers in the shape of an ugly little dwarf, and had a habit when excited of muttering 'Tint! Tint! Tint!' (*Lost! Lost! Lost!*) as if it had strayed away from its supernatural master into human society. The Countess suggested to Scott that he should write a ballad about it. A suggestion from such a quarter was a command: it was a delightful compliment to the sentiment of which Scott's mind had been full to overflowing from his early youth, that he, the bard of the clan of Scott, should receive a theme from his feudal Ladye¹. Besides, the supernatural had a peculiar charm for his imagination. He accepted his task with joy. At first he thought only of making a ballad to go with other modern ballads in

¹ The only word in the 'Lay' spelt in an archaic manner (with the exception of 'abbaye') is this word Ladye—probably with the view of marking its old meaning as the feminine of Lord.

his 'Minstrelsy.' But the subject grew rapidly on him, and he soon became aware that from his Ladye he had received a theme with which he might make a bolder effort than he had hitherto done for poetic fame. Of course the goblin must be connected with the House of Scott. There was a Ladye of Buccleuch in the sixteenth century, Dame Janet Bethune or Beaton, of somewhat evil repute for her knowledge of magic, but renowned for the vigour with which she managed the affairs of her House during a long widowhood. A daughter of this Ladye had married Lord Cranstoun, and thus healed an old feud between two families. Gilpin Horner was made the 'Goblin Page' of Lord Cranstoun, and his curious fidelity to his master combined with his general love of elfish mischief was made the unintentional instrument of working out the decree of Fate by uniting the two lovers in spite of the Ladye's bitter opposition, backed as it was by supernatural resources. Within the large bold outlines of this simple plot Scott wove his picture of Border manners.

Chance also threw in Scott's way an improvement on the four-beat couplet, which finally decided him to adopt it as the best measure for a fantastic romance. Coleridge's fragment of 'Christabel' was not published till 1816, eleven years after the 'Lay,' but it was written partly in 1797 and partly in 1800. In the latter year a friend of his, Sir John Stoddart, travelling in Scotland, made the acquaintance of Scott, and recited the unfinished poem to him. Scott felt at once that he had found in the metre of 'Christabel' the very thing that was wanted to make the old romance metre flexible enough for his purpose.

Such, according to Scott's own account, were the romantic accidents that conspired to make him the author of the 'Lay.' They are really romantic, for nothing is more distinctive of mediaeval romance than the predominance of accident, the extent to which casual circumstances determine the course of the action. Scott's romantic temper and literary habit induced him to give a prominence to these accidents in his own history that would be misleading and disproportionate if it were not corrected by other considerations. The accidents influenced him undoubtedly: romance takes its theory of accident from real life. But there were larger and less special influences at work

also. He would probably have written poetry if he had never met with Lewis. He would probably have given a picture of Border manners in some form if the Countess of Dalkeith had never said a word to him about Gilpin Horner. Such accidents as these affected the course of the stream, but without other and more steady and persistent influences there would have been no stream to turn. Naturally Scott was not sensible of the pressure of the literary atmosphere of Edinburgh and the Borderland, because he lived in it day after day and year after year, but it was in this atmosphere that his poetic life found sustenance. Without attempting the hopeless task of a complete analysis of it, we may easily distinguish one invigorating element to which Scott owed much. This was its local spirit—the spirit which we call patriotic when we think well of it and look to its good results, and provincial when we think ill of it and look to its bad results. Throughout the south of Scotland, with Edinburgh as its capital and focus, there was in the eighteenth century a wide-spread literary ambition with a local aim and a self-conscious pride. Every man with any pretension to spirit and culture, from the judge on the bench to the shoemaker on his stool, aspired to write verse, and all who wished to escape the charge of pedantry sought their subjects in local traditions, local or personal incidents, and local scenery. The nickname of ‘Modern Athens’ had not yet been applied to Edinburgh, but already in spirit Edinburgh was Athens and the Border-country was its Attica. The bards of this ambitious region boldly claimed for the Tweed and its tributaries an equality of rank with the Arno and the Tiber, and believed in their hearts that Yarrow was as sacred and inspiring a stream as Helicon. Such a local spirit has a cramping and injurious effect only on men of thin nature and narrow experience. Scott’s natural magnanimity and humour protected him against its evil tendency, while he benefited to the full from its invigorating influence. It directed him to fresh fields, and ennobled his personal ambition with the lofty aim of speaking to the world for a district that had not yet found its poet.

II. THE POEM AS A PICTURE OF BORDER MANNERS.—
THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY SPIRIT IN THE PICTURE.

Scott's expressed design in the 'Lay' was to present a picture of ancient Border manners. His preface ran as follows:—

'The Poem, now offered to the Public, is intended to illustrate the customs and manners, which anciently prevailed on the Borders of England and Scotland. The inhabitants, living in a state partly pastoral, and partly warlike, and combining habits of constant depredation with the influence of a rude spirit of chivalry, were often engaged in scenes highly susceptible of poetical ornament. As the description of scenery and manners was more the object of the Author than a combined and regular narrative, the plan of the Ancient Metrical Romance was adopted, which allows greater latitude, in this respect, than would be consistent with the dignity of a regular Poem. The same model offered other facilities, as it permits an occasional alteration of measure, which in some degree authorises the change of rhythm in the text. The machinery also, adopted from popular belief, would have seemed puerile in a Poem which did not partake of the rudeness of the old Ballad, or Metrical Romance.

'For these reasons, the Poem was put into the mouth of an ancient Minstrel, the last of his race, who, as he is supposed to have survived the Revolution, might have caught somewhat of the refinement of modern poetry without losing the simplicity of his original model. The date of the Tale itself is about the middle of the sixteenth century, when most of the personages actually flourished. The time occupied by the action is Three Nights and Three Days.'

We must not take this design too literally. The picture is a poetic picture, in which even such details of incident and feeling as are taken from real history are exalted to the romantic level and overlaid with 'poetical ornament.' Scott did not break with the eighteenth-century conception of poetic art. 'True art,' with him as with Pope, 'is Nature to advantage dressed.' His Borderers are not real borderers, not much more so in fact than Pope's shepherds were real shepherds. The relation between Scott and the eighteenth century is too roughly

stated when he is spoken of as a victorious rebel against its narrow poetic laws, a leader in the substitution of nature for artificiality. There is at least this link of continuity between them, that Scott, like the typical poets of the eighteenth century, did not think either scenes or characters fit for presentation to the refined reader without artificial 'poetic ornament.' The difference between them was a difference of subject-matter rather than poetic aim. He was tired of want of action, laborious comment on few incidents not in themselves exciting, superfluity of tranquil and refined sentiment, monotony of metre. He desiderated greater energy of movement, brief and simple comment on rapidly shifting scenes, more stir and tumult of feeling. It was more action and animation rather than more nature that Scott introduced into poetry. He is more natural—we are dealing, of course, with his poetry—than Pope or Thomson or Akenside or Gray, chiefly in this, that action is more natural, that is to say more agreeable to the majority, than stagnant reflection. But though his scenes are animated and his characters have the breath of life in them, they are studiously dressed to advantage in accordance with the artistic canon of the school of Pope.

The artificial dress in which Scott clothed his Border pageant is taken from mediaeval romance and the history of countries more civilised than the Borderland was in the sixteenth century. The manners are more like the manners of English and French chivalry as depicted by Froissart than the manners of the Borderers as depicted by Lesley or Maitland. Nobody knew this better than Scott, who in his Introduction and Notes to the Border Minstrelsy had given a complete picture of the Borderers as they were in reality—a vigorous race living in uncertain tenure of property and life, divided into clans often at feud one with another and owning obedience to no central authority, their chiefs sheep-farmers who eked out their subsistence by plunder, roughly fed, roughly housed, roughly armed, and roughly mannered. The baronial magnificence of the establishment at Branksome Hall is a 'poetical ornament'; there was no such splendour of 'Knight and page and household squire' on the Scottish borders. Loyalty to the House of Buccleuch something like Caleb Balderstone's loyalty to the House of Ravenswood

may have prompted this exaggeration, but it was required also to fulfil the ideas of poetic effect which Scott had inherited from the eighteenth century. He sympathised heartily himself with the rude energy of the sturdy moss-trooper, the stout robber of sheep and cattle and everything that was 'neither too heavy nor too hot,' William of Deloraine, but respect for poetic effect would not allow him to show the reiving Borderer in his habit as he lived: William of Deloraine is dressed to advantage in 'shield and jack and acton,' and is proclaimed in splendidly prepared lists as a 'good knight and true of noble strain.' For an unembellished picture of Border-life, with its savage feuds and frays and plundering raids, high-handed outrages and miserable sufferings, lighted here and there by incidents of heroic courage and devotion, we must go to the minute and curious lore of the Border Minstrelsy. This was Scott's real 'illustration of Border manners and customs.' Maitland of Lethington's 'Complaynt against the Thievis of Liddisdail' gives us a glimpse of the raw material of the 'good knight and true of noble strain,' as viewed by a prosaic contemporary who did not appreciate the romance underlying the reality:—

Thay spuillye puir men of their pakis,
 They leif them nocht on bed nor bakis:
 Baith hen and cok
 With reil and rok
 The Lairdis Jok
 All with him takis.

They leif not spindell, spoone, nor speit;
 Bed, bolster, blanket, sark nor scheit;
 Johne of the Parke
 Ryps kist and ark
 For all sic wark
 He is richt meit.

He is weil kend, John of the Syde;
 A greater thief did never ryde.
 He never tyris
 For 'to brek byris;
 Ouir muir and myris
 Ouir guid ane gujde.

The 'Lay' is so far true to nature that certain features of real Border-life form the substance of the poem,—the features

'highly susceptible of poetic ornament,' such as the constant state of vigilance in which the Borderers lived, their system of warning beacons, their rapid assembling when an alarm was given, the ferocious intensity of their blood-feuds, their manly respect for strong and fair enemies, their merry-meetings in times of truce, their rude superstitions. But these realities, with which the poet was enthusiastically familiar, are translated into an atmosphere of mediaeval romance.

III. THE DICTION OF THE POEM.

Scott's great aim in his diction was, in his own words, to 'engraft a modern refinement on ancient simplicity.' He tried to strike a mean between 'the rude and energetic diction' of the old ballad, and 'the highly-wrought and ornamented' style of the eighteenth century—to preserve the old energy and substitute modern art for ancient rudeness. In the pursuit of this purpose he made copious use of the 'poetic diction' which Wordsworth anathematised. The recognition of this helps to define Scott's place among the reformers of poetry.

It is far from easy to define in what the so-called 'poetic diction' of the eighteenth century consists. Wordsworth laboured hard to explain, and his illustrations were intelligible enough, but when he sought to express his idea of poetic diction in general terms, his meaning was not so easy to grasp and his words were sometimes misleading. If we compare Pope's 'Messiah' or Johnson's paraphrase of the lesson of the Ant with the Scriptural originals, we feel at once that the poetic ornamentation is false and artificial. 'How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard?' This is not improved by the cumbrous translation:—

How long shall sloth usurp thy useless hours,
Unnerve thy vigour and unchain thy powers?
While artful shades thy downy couch enclose
And soft solicitation courts repose.

But we are put on a wrong tack when we are told that this kind of diction is bad because it departs from the language of prose and of ordinary conversation. Doubtless it was fostered in poetry by the belief which Wordsworth rightly condemned, that poetry ought to speak in a dialect peculiar to itself, and that diction was suited for poetry in proportion to its remoteness

from plain speech. But the spirit which produced a stiff and stilted diction in poetry was not confined to poetry, nor indeed to the eighteenth century, although the poetry of that century was peculiarly infected by it. It might be described by the somewhat intangible phrase 'fear of vulgarity'—a phrase which is intangible because people's ideas differ so widely as to what constitutes vulgarity. Whenever a poet consciously aims at not being vulgar, he is in the state of mind that produced the poetic diction of the eighteenth century. Wordsworth's protest against this habit of mind, cramping to the man of genius and fatal to the poetaster, was a part of his immeasurable service to poetry. Steele's criticism of Phillips's 'Pastorals' is an example of it:—
'It is a nice piece of art to raise a proverb above the vulgar style and still keep it easy and unaffected. Thus the old wish, "God rest his soul," is very finely turned:—

"Then gentle Sidney liv'd, the shepherd's friend,
Eternal blessings on his shade attend."

Another example is Byron's criticism of Rogers's 'Pleasures of Memory':—'There is not a vulgar line in the poem.' That he had steered clear of vulgarity was the acme of praise for the fashionable serious poetry of the eighteenth century.

Now Scott did not, like Wordsworth, recoil rebelliously from this canon of criticism. He was himself sensitive on the point of vulgarity, and anxious to avoid it, although his natural vigour and sympathy with robust and stirring life saved him from any danger of over-refinement. As he was careful to dress his Borderers to advantage in the trappings of romance, so he was careful not to carry his imitation of the rough energy of the old ballad too far—to 'engraft modern refinement on ancient simplicity.' For example, the refined phraseology of the following is peculiar to the eighteenth century:—

Visors were raised, and faces shown,
And many a friend to friend made known,
Partook of social cheer.
Some drove the jolly bowl about;
With dice and draughts some chased the day;
And some, with many a merry shout,
In riot, revelry, and rout,
Pursued the foot-ball play.

The following is equally characteristic :—

But o'er her warrior's bloody bier
The Ladye dropp'd nor flower nor tear!
Vengeance, deep-brooding o'er the slain,
Had lock'd the source of softer woe;
And burning pride, and high disdain,
Forbade the rising tear to flow.

It cannot be said that this poetic diction is a fault; it is offensive only when there is too much of it and it is used indiscriminately. The style soon becomes intolerably monotonous in the description of still life, but in Scott's animated narrative such passages as the above give a certain stateliness to the rapid current, and elevate the tone of the composition as a whole. The story is never encumbered and impeded by the ornament.

IV. THE METRE.

Coleridge, from whom Scott took the first hint of his metre, believed that it was 'founded on a new principle; namely that of counting in each line the accents and not the syllables.' This was not really a new principle; it was only an old principle from which English verse had departed in a mistaken zeal for correctness, the mistake being confirmed by naming lines according to their number of syllables, octosyllabic, decasyllabic. It was by accents and not by syllables that Chaucer counted in his four-accent or four-beat verses, and this was the tendency all along of poets who trusted to their ear, even after lovers of 'correctness' had established the dogma that there ought to be eight syllables. We find Lovelace in the middle of the seventeenth century, when revising a short poem for a new edition, changing all his seven-syllable lines into eight-syllable ones. Coleridge only turned the unconscious practice of the old metricians into a definite theory, carried it out more systematically, and made a more frequent use of triple rhythm to vary the monotony of the standard double: Scott adopted the same plan with enthusiasm, varying the place of the accent in the line, the number of accents, the number of syllables in the foot; sometimes also interspersing his couplets with stanzas in which the rhyme falls as if by caprice.

The metre of the 'Lay' is much more irregular and varied than the metre of 'Christabel,' and the melody of the verse is much rougher. Speaking of the rapidity with which the poem was written, Scott made the humorous confession that 'there was little occasion for pause or hesitation, when a troublesome rhyme might be accommodated by an alteration of the stanza, or where an incorrect measure might be remedied by a variation of the rhyme.' When he began to write verse he was severely lectured by Lewis for the badness of his rhymes, and there are some bad rhymes even in the 'Lay,' the worst perhaps being in the lines:—

Say to your Lords of high emprise
Who war on women and on boys.

But the verse flows with such force that it is only the connoisseur of subtleties in verbal melody that is conscious of its metrical defects. For the ordinary ear the exhilarating beat of Scott's rough and ready music is one of his greatest charms. 'I am sensible,' he once said, 'that if there be anything good about my poetry or prose either, it is a hurried frankness of composition, which pleases soldiers, sailors, and young people of bold and active disposition.' Mr. Hutton, who quotes this remark in his suggestive sketch of Scott's life, adds that 'Scott's is almost the only poetry in the English language that not only runs thus in the head of average men, but heats the head in which it runs by the mere force of its hurried frankness of style.'

V. THE SUPERNATURAL MACHINERY.

When the 'Lay' was published, it became, as we have seen, popular at once, but exception was taken by almost all the critics to what is technically called the 'machinery' of the poem, the supernatural element, the Ladye learned in magic, the River Spirit, and the Mountain Spirit, the great Wizard and his book, and above all, the Goblin Page, whose pranks are the hinges of the action. Jeffrey took the lead in the 'Edinburgh Review,' and his verdict, which we shall quote, was very generally accepted, and has often been repeated since.

'The magic of the lady, the midnight visit to Melrose, and the mighty book of the enchanter, which occupy nearly one third of the

whole poem, and engross the attention of the reader for a long time after the commencement of the narrative, are of no use whatsoever in the subsequent development of the fable, and do not contribute, in any degree, either to the production or explanation of the incidents that follow. The whole character and proceedings of the goblin page, in like manner, may be considered as merely episodal; for though he is employed in some of the subordinate incidents, it is remarkable that no material part of the fable requires the intervention of supernatural agency. The young Buccleuch might have wandered into the wood, although he had not been decoyed by a goblin; and the dame might have given her daughter to the deliverer of her son, although she had never listened to the prattlement of the river and mountain spirits.'

Scott was so badgered, both publicly and privately, about the structure of the poem, that he wrote a long apology in answer to one of his private critics, Miss Anna Seward (*Lockhart's Life*, vol. ii. p. 27, ed. 1837). With his usual courteous modesty, he admitted that the critics were right. The story 'is deficient in that sort of continuity which a story ought to have, and which were it to write again, I would endeavour to give it.' 'The Dwarf Page is also an excrescence, and I plead guilty to all the censures concerning him. The truth is, he has a history.' Then, after explaining how Lady Dalkeith asked him to write a ballad about the story of Gilpin Horner, Scott goes on:—'I began a few verses, to be called the Goblin Page; and they lay long by me, till the applause of some friends whose judgment I valued induced me to resume the poem; so on I wrote, knowing no more than the man in the moon how I was to end. At length the story appeared so uncouth that I was fain to put it into the mouth of my old minstrel, lest the nature of it should be misunderstood, and I should be suspected of setting up a new school of poetry, instead of a feeble attempt to imitate the old. In the process of the romance the page, intended to be the principal person in the work, contrived (from the baseness of his natural propensities, I suppose) to slink downstairs into the kitchen, and now he must e'en abide there.'

That this humble confession and apology was only polite chaff from an author put upon his defence by an amiable lady and not disposed to enter upon serious argument in the circumstances, will hardly be doubted by anybody familiar with Scott's

character. If Scott was serious in his plea of guilty, it is a remarkable instance of genius being unconscious of its own excellence. There is much more truth in another saying of his, applied in the letter to Miss Seward to 'the herd of critics,' but in his private conversation applied to Jeffrey, that 'they did not understand what he called poetry.' They certainly did not understand this particular example of romantic poetry. There is much to be said in favour of the maligned goblin, whom his author was unfeeling enough to disclaim as an excrescence. The Ladye might have been checkmated and Margaret and Cranstoun married without him, but as the story stands, his help was essential. His pranks are not episodical, but in the main line of the action. That 'no material part of the fable requires the intervention of supernatural agency' is no more true of Scott's poem than of the *Iliad*. Further, whether or not the end was clear to the romancer when he began, and however grotesque the supernatural agents are, the structure of the romance is perfectly regular as it stands—its regularity of plot in fact is one of the points in which it differs from mediæval romances, one of the points in which Scott profited from the example of the novelists of the eighteenth century.

The truth is that the supernatural element, so far from being an excrescence, overhangs, encompasses, and interpenetrates the human element in the story. The love of Cranstoun and Margaret is a matter of keen concern and high debate in the supernatural world of magicians, elemental spirits, and hobgoblins which Scott adopted as the peculiar creed of Border superstition. The Ladye appeals to this upper world in the first Canto, and puts its agency in motion. In the last Canto, defeated by the Fate that controls all from a still higher station, through the very instruments whose help she had invoked, she acknowledges her defeat, wreaks her spite on the goblin, and renounces magic for ever. The human story lies between, compact and regular enough, a story of true love successful in spite of obstinate impediments, those impediments being removed by supernatural means. They might have been removed by other means, but in that case the romance would have been a different kind of romance. The supernatural element cannot be detached without destroying the whole structure. The last Canto

is superfluous only if the first Canto is superfluous; the one completes what the other began. The Ladye in her secret bower, able through her magic art to hear and understand the voices of the intermediate world of spirits, learns that Fate has decreed the union of her daughter with a bitterly hated enemy. She resolves to fight against it, and recognising the strength of her adversary, sends for the mighty book of the great wizard of her clan, a book buried with him and only to be claimed as a last resource in an hour of supreme peril. But Fate is too strong for her. The instrument with which she had hoped to defeat Fate, becomes the instrument of her own defeat. Her messenger is her stoutest and most trusty retainer. He courageously 'wins the treasure of the tomb,' but as he is bearing it back he encounters Cranstoun, the daughter's lover, and is unhorsed and seriously wounded. Cranstoun rides off, leaving the unconscious knight to the care of his page. But Fate has so ordered it that the page is a goblin, a truant imp of the great wizard's, who having strayed from his supernatural master has attached himself to Cranstoun, and with all his goblin trickiness is most devoted to his temporary human master. The inquisitive goblin spies the book in the breast of the wounded messenger, smears the clasps with blood, and opens it. He is struck to the ground by a buffet from a supernatural hand before he has time to read more than one spell; but with the help of that spell, he manages the human puppets of the story so as to bring about the very end that the Ladye feared. With the help of the book from which the Ladye had hoped to learn how to baffle Fate, he conveys Deloraine to her chamber, lures away the heir of Branksome to fall into English hands, and steals Deloraine's armour so that Cranstoun may take his place in the duel and win back the Ladye's son for her. She cannot refuse her daughter to the deliverer of her son and heir. Pride is quelled and Love is free. The story of the lovers ends here, but the 'Lay' would have been incomplete if it had not told how the Ladye bore her defeat by Fate, and what became of the imp whom Fate had used as an instrument in the struggle. The last use that she makes of her magical power is to punish him for his intervention by making the wizard take him back to perpetual imprisonment.

We may, if we please, call this supernatural machinery grotesque, or childish, or ridiculous, but it is absurd to speak of it as an excrescence, or otherwise than thoroughly transfused with the human interest of the story. Only a born romancer, in full imaginative sympathy with such childish or childlike superstitions, could have effected so complete a transfusion. It was no wonder that Scott took refuge in mock-acquiescence when the main triumph of his peculiar genius was so generally misunderstood: the misunderstanding was general enough among all the articulate critics to make him distrust himself. Machinery of the kind was specially objectionable to the cool matter-of-fact reason of the eighteenth century, and this perhaps explains why the critics did not take the trouble to understand such a novelty. That it was grotesque and uncouth, Scott himself was fully aware, and he tried to anticipate this objection by putting the 'Lay' into the mouth of an old minstrel. For the use of it by a Border Minstrel, he had a perfect historical defence, if he had cared to enlarge upon it. Owing to the bitterness of border feuds reconciliations were so antecedently incredible, that a Border audience would hardly have believed in them as possible except through supernatural interference, and the agents whom Scott employed were perfectly familiar to Border superstition.

Scott's supernatural machinery may be looked at in relation to the literature of the time. The study of the supernatural for literary purposes was a passing fashion during the last ten years of the eighteenth century. It was brought to Edinburgh by Mrs. Barbauld and 'Monk' Lewis, and while Scott and Leyden in the Border country were hunting after old ballads of the supernatural and making new, Coleridge and Wordsworth on the Quantock Hills were discussing the proper artistic treatment of this fascinating element, and Coleridge was writing 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' and 'Christabel'—incomparably the highest achievements of this phase of the Romantic revival. The fashion was set by Germany, and its rapid spread is a curious instance of the international unity of literature. Its prevalence at the time explains why Lady Dalkeith was so charmed with the story of Gilpin Horner, and eager that Scott should use it as a subject for a ballad. A new goblin was a delightful discovery when interest in the subject ran so high

As regards Scott's treatment of the supernatural, it appears commonplace when compared with Coleridge's. The Ladye, the wizard, the goblin and the spirits are supernatural only in their powers ; there is nothing strange and mystical about their motives, which are those of ordinary human beings, or about their mode of action, which, with the exception of the glamour spell, is merely an extension of ordinary physical laws. The magic in the poem is not Natural Magic, in Sir David Brewster's sense, but it is the common black art, the familiar magic of romance and vulgar superstition. The River Spirit and the Mountain Spirit gossip together like honest mortals, with a friendly interest in the doings of their neighbours. Even in the scene at the grave of the great wizard, everything is palpable either to feeling or to sight : the fears of the sturdy Borderer are akin to fears of bodily injury. There is nothing in that scene so occult as the effect of Geraldine's askance look at Christabel. The goblin's tricks are the tricks of a sly mischievous truant schoolboy ; and Michael Scott's attitude to him is that of a stern and irascible schoolmaster. In short, the poet's description of his spirit world is as healthy, humorous, direct, and intelligible as his description of human life.

ERRATUM.

Transpose the last two notes on p. 153 to p. 161, end of Canto III.

THE
LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

INTRODUCTION.

THE way was long, the wind was cold,
The Minstrel was infirm and old;
His wither'd cheek, and tresses gray,
Seem'd to have known a better day;
The harp, his sole remaining joy, 5
Was carried by an orphan boy.
The last of all the bards was he,
Who sung of Border chivalry;
For, welladay! their date was fled,
His tuneful brethren all were dead; 10
And he, neglected and oppress'd,
Wish'd to be with them, and at rest.
No more on prancing palfrey borne,
He caroll'd, light as lark at morn;
No longer courted and caress'd, 15
High placed in hall, a welcome guest,
He pour'd, to lord and lady gay,
The unpremeditated lay:
Old times were changed, old manners gone;
A stranger fill'd the Stuarts' throne; 20
The bigots of the iron time
Had call'd his harmless art a crime.
A wandering Harper, scorn'd and poor,
He begg'd his bread from door to door,
And tuned, to please a peasant's ear, 25
The harp a king had loved to hear.

He pass'd where Newark's stately tower
Looks out from Yarrow's birchen bower:

The Minstrel gazed with wishful eye—
 No humbler resting-place was nigh. 30
 With hesitating step at last,
 The embattled portal arch he pass'd,
 Whose ponderous grate and massy bar
 Had oft roll'd back the tide of war,
 But never closed the iron door 35
 Against the desolate and poor.
 The Duchess mark'd his weary pace,
 His timid mien, and reverend face,
 And bade her page the menials tell
 That they should tend the old man well: 40
 For she had known adversity,
 Though born in such a high degree;
 In pride of power, in beauty's bloom,
 Had wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb!

When kindness had his wants supplied, 45
 And the old man was gratified,
 Began to rise his minstrel pride:
 And he began to talk anon,
 Of good Earl Francis, dead and gone,
 And of Earl Walter, rest him God! 50
 A braver ne'er to battle rode;
 And how full many a tale he knew,
 Of the old warriors of Buccleuch:
 And, would the noble Duchess deign
 To listen to an old man's strain, 55
 Though stiff his hand, his voice though weak,
 He thought even yet, the sooth to speak,
 That, if she loved the harp to hear,
 He could make music to her ear.

The humble boon was soon obtain'd; 60
 The Aged Minstrel audience gain'd.
 But, when he reach'd the room of state,
 Where she, with all her ladies, sate,
 Perchance he wish'd his boon denied:
 For, when to tune his harp he tried, 65

His trembling hand had lost the ease
Which marks security to please:
And scenes, long past, of joy and pain,
Came wildering o'er his aged brain—
He tried to tune his harp in vain! 70
The pitying Duchess praised its chime,
And gave him heart, and gave him time,
Till every string's according glee
Was blended into harmony.
And then, he said, he would full fain 75
He could recall an ancient strain
He never thought to sing again.
It was not framed for village churls,
But for high dames and mighty earls ;
He had play'd it to King Charles the Good, 80
When he kept court in Holyrood ;
And much he wish'd, yet fear'd, to try
The long-forgotten melody. ~~And~~
Amid the strings his fingers stray'd,
And an uncertain warbling made, 85
And oft he shook his hoary head.
But when he caught the measure wild,
The old man raised his face, and smiled ;
And lighten'd up his faded eye
With all a poet's ecstasy! 90
In varying cadence, soft or strong,
He swept the sounding chords along ; X
The present scene, the future lot,
His toils, his wants, were all forgot:
Cold diffidence, and age's frost, 95
In the full tide of song were lost ;
Each blank, in faithless memory void,
The poet's glowing thought supplied ;
And, while his harp responsive rung,
'Twas thus the LATEST MINSTREL sung. 100

CANTO FIRST.

I.

THE feast was over in Branksome Tower,
 And the Ladye had gone to her secret bower:
 Her bower that was guarded by word and by spell,
 Deadly to hear, and deadly to tell—
 Jesu Maria, shield us well! 5
 No living wight, save the Ladye alone,
 Had dared to cross the threshold stone.

II.

The tables were drawn, it was idlesse all;
 Knight, and page, and household squire,
 Loiter'd through the lofty hall, 10
 Or crowded round the ample fire:
 The stag-hounds, weary with the chase,
 Lay stretch'd upon the rushy floor,
 And urged, in dreams, the forest race
 From Teviot-stone to Eskdale-moor. 15

III.

Nine-and-twenty knights of fame
 Hung their shields in Branksome Hall;
 Nine-and-twenty squires of name
 Brought them their steeds to bower from stall:
 Nine-and-twenty yeomen tall 20
 Waited, duteous, on them all:
 They were all knights of mettle true,
 Kinsmen to the bold Buccleuch.

IV.

Ten of them were sheathed in steel,
 With belted sword, and spur on heel: 25
 They quitted not their harness bright,
 Neither by day, nor yet by night:

They lay down to rest,
With corslet laced,
Pillow'd on buckler cold and hard ; 30
They carved at the meal
With gloves of steel,
And they drank the red wine through the helmet barr'd.

V.

Ten squires, ten yeomen, mail-clad men,
Waited the beck of the warders ten : 35
Thirty steeds, both fleet and wight,
Stood saddled in stable day and night,
Barbed with frontlet of steel, I trôw,
And with Jedwood-axe at saddlebow ;
A hundred more fed free in stall :— 40
Such was the custom of Branksome Hall.

VI.

Why do these steeds stand ready dight ?
Why watch these warriors, arm'd, by night ?—
They watch, to hear the blood-hound baying ;
They watch, to hear the war-horn braying ; 45
To see St. George's red cross streaming,
To see the midnight beacon gleaming :
They watch, against Southern force and guile,
Lest Scroop, or Howard, or Percy's powers,
Threaten Branksome's lordly towers, 50
From Warkworth, or Naworth, or Merry Carlisle.

VII.

Such is the custom of Branksome Hall.—
Many a valiant knight is here ;
But he, the chieftain of them all,
His sword hangs rusting on the wall, 55
Beside his broken spear.
Bards long shall tell,
How Lord Walter fell !
When startled burghers fled, afar,
The furies of the Border war ; 60

When the streets of high Dunedin
 Saw lances gleam, and falchions redden,
 And heard the slogan's deadly yell—
 Then the Chief of Branksome fell.

VIII.

Can piety the discord heal,	65
Or stanch the death-feud's enmity?	
Can Christian lore, can patriot zeal,	
Can love of blessed charity?	
No! vainly to each holy shrine,	
In mutual pilgrimage, they drew ;	70
Implored, in vain, the grace divine	
For chiefs, their own red falchions slew ;	
While Cessford owns the rule of Carr,	
While Ettrick boasts the line of Scott,	
The slaughter'd chiefs, the mortal jar,	75
The havoc of the feudal war,	
Shall never, never be forgot !	

IX.

In sorrow o'er Lord Walter's bier	
The warlike foresters had bent ;	
And many a flower, and many a tear,	80
Old Teviot's maids and matrons lent :	
But o'er her warrior's bloody bier	
The Ladye dropp'd nor flower nor tear !	
Vengeance, deep-brooding o'er the slain,	
Had lock'd the source of softer woe ;	85
And burning pride, and high disdain,	
Forbade the rising tear to flow ;	
Until, amid his sorrowing clan,	
Her son lisp'd from the nurse's knee—	
'And if I live to be a man,	90
My father's death revenged shall be !'	
Then fast the mother's tears did seek	
To dew the infant's kindling cheek.	

X.

All loose her negligent attire,
All loose her golden hair, 95
Hung Margaret o'er her slaughter'd sire,
And wept in wild despair.
But not alone the bitter tear
Had filial grief supplied ;
For hopeless love, and anxious fear, 100
Had lent their mingled tide :
Nor in her mother's alter'd eye
Dared she to look for sympathy.
Her lover, 'gainst her father's clan,
With Carr in arms had stood, 105
When Mathouse burn to Melrose ran,
All purple with their blood ;
And well she knew, her mother dread,
Before Lord Cranstoun she should wed,
Would see her on her dying bed. 110

XI.

Of noble race the Ladye came,
Her father was a clerk of fame,
Of Bethune's line of Picardie :
He learn'd the art that none may name,
In Padua, far beyond the sea. 115
Men said, he changed his mortal frame
By feat of magic mystery ;
For when, in studious mood, he paced
St. Andrew's cloister'd hall,
His form no darkening shadow traced 120
Upon the sunny wall!

XII.

And of his skill, as bards avow,
He taught that Ladye fair,
Till to her bidding she could bow
The viewless forms of air. 125
And now she sits in secret bower,
In old Lord David's western tower,

And listens to a heavy sound,
 That moans the mossy turrets round.
 Is it the roar of Teviot's tide, 130
 That chafes against the scaur's red side?
 Is it the wind, that swings the oaks?
 Is it the echo from the rocks?
 What may it be, the heavy sound,
 That moans old Branksome's turrets round? 135

XIII.

At the sullen, moaning sound,
 The ban-dogs bay and howl;
 And, from the turrets round,
 Loud whoops the startled owl.
 In the hall, both squire and knight 140
 Swore that a storm was near,
 And looked forth to view the night;
 But the night was still and clear!

XIV.

From the sound of Teviot's tide,
 Chafing with the mountain's side, 145
 From the groan of the wind-swung oak,
 From the sullen echo of the rock,
 From the voice of the coming storm,
 The Ladye knew it well!
 It was the Spirit of the Flood that spoke, 150
 And he call'd on the Spirit of the Fell.

XV.

RIVER SPIRIT.

'Sleep'st thou, brother?'

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT.

'Brother, nay—

On my hills the moonbeams play.
 From Craik-cross to Skelfhill Pen,
 By every rill, in every glen, 155

Merry elves their morris pacing,
 To ærial minstrelsy,
 Emerald rings on brown heath tracing,
 Trip it deft and merrily.
 Up, and mark their nimble feet!
 Up, and list their music sweet!'

160

XVI.

RIVER SPIRIT.

'Tears of an imprison'd maiden
 Mix with my polluted stream;
 Margaret of Branksome, sorrow-laden,
 Mourns beneath the moon's pale beam.
 Tell me, thou, who view'st the stars,
 When shall cease these feudal jars?
 What shall be the maiden's fate?
 Who shall be the maiden's mate?'

165

XVII.

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT.

'Arthur's slow wain his course doth roll,
 In utter darkness round the pole;
 The Northern Bear lowers black and grim:
 Orion's studded belt is dim;
 Twinkling faint, and distant far,
 Shimmers through mist each planet star;
 Ill may I read their high decree!
 But no kind influence deign they shower
 On Teviot's tide, and Branksome's Tower,
 Till pride be quell'd, and love be free.'

170

175

XVIII.

The unearthly voices ceased,
 And the heavy sound was still;
 It died on the river's breast,
 It died on the side of the hill.
 But round Lord David's tower
 The sound still floated near;

180

185

For it rung in the Ladye's bower,
 And it rung in the Ladye's ear.
 She raised her stately head,
 And her heart throbb'd high with pride :
 'Your mountains shall bend,
 And your streams ascend,
 Ere Margaret be our foeman's bride !' 190

XIX.

The Ladye sought the lofty hall,
 Where many a bold retainer lay,
 And, with jocund din, among them all, 195
 Her son pursued his infant play.
 A fancied moss-trooper, the boy
 The truncheon of a spear bestrode,
 And round the hall, right merrily,
 In mimic foray rode. 200
 Even bearded knights, in arms grown old,
 Share in his frolic gambols bore,
 Albeit their hearts of rugged mould,
 Were stubborn as the steel they wore.
 For the gray warriors prophesied, 205
 How the brave boy, in future war,
 Should tame the Unicorn's pride,
 Exalt the Crescent and the Star.

XX.

The Ladye forgot her purpose high,
 One moment, and no more ; 210
 One moment gazed with a mother's eye,
 As she paused at the arched door :
 Then from amid the armed train,
 She called to her William of Deloraine.

XXI.

A stark moss-trooping Scott was he, 215
 As e'er couch'd Border lance by knee :
 Through Solway sands, through Tarras moss,
 Blindfold he knew the paths to cross ;

By wily turns, by desperate bounds,
 Had baffled Percy's best blood-hounds; 220
 In Eske, or Liddel, fords were none,
 But he would ride them, one by one;
 Alike to him was time or tide,
 December's snow, or July's pride;
 Alike to him was tide or time, 225
 Moonless midnight, or matin prime:
 Steady of heart, and stout of hand,
 As ever drove prey from Cumberland;
 Five times outlawed had he been,
 By England's King, and Scotland's Queen. 230

XXII.

'Sir William of Deloraine, good at need,
 Mount thee on the wightest steed;
 Spare not to spur, nor stint to ride,
 Until thou come to fair Tweedside;
 And in Melrose's holy pile 235
 Seek thou the Monk of St. Mary's aisle.
 Greet the father well from me;
 Say that the fated hour is come,
 And to-night he shall watch with thee,
 To win the treasure of the tomb: 240
 For this will be St. Michael's night,
 And, though stars be dim, the moon is bright;
 And the Cross, of bloody red,
 Will point to the grave of the mighty dead.

XXIII.

'What he gives thee, see thou keep; 245
 Stay not thou for food or sleep:
 Be it scroll, or be it book,
 Into it, Knight, thou must not look;
 If thou readest, thou art lorn!
 Better hadst thou ne'er been born.' 250

XXIV.

'O swiftly can speed my dapple-gray steed,
 Which drinks of the Teviot clear;
 Ere break of day,' the Warrior 'gan say,
 'Again will I be here:
 And safer by none may thy errand be done, 255
 Than, noble dame, by me;
 Letter nor line know I never a one,
 Were 't my neck-verse at Hairibee.'

XXV.

Soon in his saddle sate he fast,
 And soon the steep descent he past, 260
 Soon cross'd the sounding barbican,
 And soon the Teviot side he won.
 Eastward the wooded path he rode,
 Green hazels o'er his basnet nod;
 He pass'd the Peel of Goldiland, 265
 And cross'd old Borthwick's roaring strand;
 Dimly he view'd the Moat-hill's mound,
 Where Druid shades still fitted round:
 In Hawick twinkled many a light;
 Behind him soon they set in night; 270
 And soon he spurr'd his courser keen
 Beneath the tower of Hazeldean.

XXVI.

The clattering hoofs the watchmen mark:
 'Stand, ho! thou courier of the dark.'
 'For Branksome, ho!' the knight rejoin'd, 275
 And left the friendly tower behind.
 He turn'd him now from Teviotside,
 And, guided by the tinkling rill,
 Northward the dark ascent did ride,
 And gained the moor at Horsliehill; 280
 Broad on the left before him lay,
 For many a mile, the Roman way.

XXVII.

A moment now he slack'd his speed,
 A moment breathed his panting steed;
 Drew saddle-girth and corslet-band, 285
 And loosen'd in the sheath his brand.
 On Minto-crag the moonbeams glint,
 Where Barnhill hew'd his bed of flint;
 Who flung his outlaw'd limbs to rest,
 Where falcons hang their giddy nest, 290
 Mid cliffs, from whence his eagle eye
 For many a league his prey could spy;
 Cliffs, doubling on their echoes borne
 The terrors of the robber's horn;
 Cliffs, which, for many a later year, 295
 The warbling Doric reed shall hear,
 When some sad swain shall teach the grove,
 Ambition is no cure for love!

XXVIII.

Unchallenged, thence pass'd Deloraine,
 To ancient Riddel's fair domain, 300
 Where Aill, from mountains freed,
 Down from the lakes did raving come;
 Each wave was crested with tawny foam,
 Like the mane of a chestnut steed.
 In vain! no torrent, deep or broad, 305
 Might bar the bold moss-trooper's road.

XXIX.

At the first plunge the horse sunk low,
 And the water broke o'er the saddlebow;
 Above the foaming tide, I ween,
 Scarce half the charger's neck was seen: 310
 For he was barded from counter to tail,
 And the rider was armed complete in mail;
 Never heavier man and horse
 Stemm'd a midnight torrent's force.

The warrior's very plume, I say, 315
 Was daggled by the dashing spray:
 Yet, through good heart, and Our Ladye's grace,
 At length he gain'd the landing-place.

XXX.

Now Bowden Moor the march-man won,
 And sternly shook his plumed head, 320
 As glanced his eye o'er Halidon:
 For on his soul the slaughter red
 Of that unhallow'd morn arose,
 When first the Scott and Carr were foes;
 When royal James beheld the fray; 325
 Prize to the victor of the day;
 When Home and Douglas, in the van,
 Bore down Buccleuch's retiring clan,
 Till gallant Cessford's heart-blood dear
 Reek'd on dark Elliot's Border spear. 330

XXXI.

In bitter mood he spurred fast,
 And soon the hated heath was past;
 And far beneath, in lustre wan,
 Old Melros' rose, and fair Tweed ran:
 Like some tall rock with lichens gray, 335
 Seem'd dimly huge, the dark Abbaye.
 When Hawick he pass'd, had curfew rung,
 Now midnight lauds were in Melrose sung.
 The sound, upon the fitful gale,
 In solemn wise did rise and fail, 340
 Like that wild harp, whose magic tone
 Is waken'd by the winds alone.
 But when Melrose he reach'd, 'twas silence all:
 He meetly stabled his steed in stall,
 And sought the convent's lonely wall. 345

HERE paused the harp ; and with its swell
The Master's fire and courage fell :
Dejectedly, and low, he bow'd,
And, gazing timid on the crowd,
He seem'd to seek, in every eye, 350
If they approved his minstrelsy ;
And, diffident of present praise,
Somewhat he spoke of former days,
And how old age, and wandering long,
Had done his hand and harp some wrong. 355
The Duchess, and her daughters fair,
And every gentle lady there,
Each after each, in due degree,
Gave praises to his melody ;
His hand was true, his voice was clear, 360
And much they long'd the rest to hear :
Encouraged thus, the Aged Man,
After meet rest, again began.

CANTO SECOND.

I.

X If thou would'st view fair Melrose aright,
 Go visit it by the pale moonlight ;
 For the gay beams of lightsome day,
 Gild, but to flout, the ruins grey.
 When the broken arches are black in night, 5
 And each shafted oriel glimmers white ;
 When the cold light's uncertain shower
 Streams 'on the ruin'd central tower ;
 When buttress and buttress, alternately,
 Seem framed of ebon and ivory ; 10
 When silver edges the imagery,
 And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die ;
 When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
 And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,
 Then go—but go alone the while— 15
 Then view St. David's ruin'd pile ;
 And, home returning, soothly swear,
 Was never scene so sad and fair ! †

II.

Short halt did Deloraine make there ;
 Little reck'd he of the scene so fair ; 20
 With dagger's hilt, on the wicket strong,
 He struck full loud, and struck full long.
 The porter hurried to the gate—
 ' Who knocks so loud, and knocks so late ?'
 ' From Branksome I,' the warrior cried ; 25
 And straight the wicket open'd wide :
 For Branksome's Chiefs had in battle stood,
 To fence the rights of fair Melrose ;
 And lands and livings, many a rood,
 Had gifted the shrine for their souls' repose. 30

III.

Bold Deloraine his errand said;
 The porter bent his humble head;
 With torch in hand, and feet unshod,
 And noiseless step, the path he trod;
 The arched cloister, far and wide, 35
 Rang to the warrior's clanking stride,
 Till, stooping low his lofty crest,
 He enter'd the cell of the ancient priest,
 And lifted his barred aventayle,
 To hail the Monk of St. Mary's aisle. 40

IV.

'The Ladye of Branksome greets thee by me;
 Says, that the fated hour is come,
 And that to-night I shall watch with thee,
 To win the treasure of the tomb.'
 From sackcloth couch the Monk arose, 45
 With toil his stiffen'd limbs he rear'd;
 A hundred years had flung their snows
 On his thin locks and floating beard.

V.

And strangely on the Knight look'd he,
 And his blue eyes gleam'd wild and wide; 50
 'And darest thou, Warrior! seek to see
 What heaven and hell alike would hide?
 My breast, in belt of iron pent,
 With shirt of hair and scourge of thorn;
 For threescore years, in penance spent, 55
 My knees those flinty stones have worn;
 Yet all too little to atone
 For knowing what should ne'er be known.
 Would'st thou thy every future year
 In ceaseless prayer and penance dree, 60
 Yet wait thy latter end with fear—
 Then, daring Warrior, follow me!'

VI.

'Penance, father, will I none;
 Prayer know I hardly one;
 For mass or prayer can I rarely tarry, 65
 Save to patter an Ave Mary,
 When I ride on a Border foray.
 Other prayer can I none;
 So speed me my errand, and let me be gone.'—

VII.

Again on the Knight look'd the Churchman old, 70
 And again he sighed heavily;
 For he had himself been a warrior bold,
 And fought in Spain and Italy.
 And he thought on the days that were long since by,
 When his limbs were strong, and his courage was
 high:— 75
 Now, slow and faint, he led the way,
 Where, cloister'd round, the garden lay;
 The pillar'd arches were over their head,
 And beneath their feet were the bones of the dead.

VIII.

Spreading herbs, and flowerets bright, 80
 Glisten'd with the dew of night;
 Nor herb, nor floweret, glisten'd there,
 But was carved in the cloister-arches as fair.
 The Monk gazed long on the lovely moon,
 Then into the night he looked forth; 85
 And red and bright the streamers light
 Were dancing in the glowing north.
 So had he seen, in fair Castile,
 The youth in glittering squadrons start;
 Sudden the flying jennet wheel, 90
 And hurl the unexpected dart.
 He knew, by the streamers that shot so bright,
 That spirits were riding the northern light.

IX.

By a steel-clenched postern door,
 They enter'd now the chancel tall; 95
 The darken'd roof rose high aloof
 On pillars lofty and light and small :
 The key-stone, that lock'd each ribbed aisle,
 Was a fleur-de-lys, or a quatre-feuille;
 The corbells were carved grotesque and grim; 100
 And the pillars, with cluster'd shafts so trim,
 With base and with capital flourish'd around,
 Seem'd bundles of lances which garlands had bound.

X.

Full many a scutcheon and banner riven,
 Shook to the cold night-wind of heaven, 105
 Around the screened altar's pale;
 And there the dying lamps did burn,
 Before thy low and lonely urn,
 O gallant chief of Otterburne!
 And thine, dark Knight of Liddesdale ! 110
 O fading honours of the dead !
 O high ambition, lowly laid !

XI.

The moon on the east oriel shone
 Through slender shafts of shapely stone,
 By foliated tracery combined; 115
 Thou would'st have thought some fairy's hand
 'Twixt poplars straight the ozier wand,
 In many a freakish knot, had twined; 1
 Then framed a spell, when the work was done,
 And changed the willow wreaths to stone. 120
 The silver light, so pale and faint,
 Show'd many a prophet, and many a saint,
 Whose image on the glass was dyed;
 Full in the midst, his Cross of Red
 Triumphant Michael brandished, 125
 And trampled the Apostate's pride.

The moon-beam kiss'd the holy pane,
And threw on the pavement a bloody stain.

XII.

They sate them down on a marble stone,
(A Scottish monarch slept below ;) 130
Thus spoke the Monk, in solemn tone :
'I was not always a man of woe ;
For Paynim countries I have trod,
And fought beneath the Cross of God :
Now, strange to my eyes thine arms appear, 135
And their iron clang sounds strange to my ear.

XIII.

'In these far climes it was my lot
To meet the wondrous Michael Scott ;
A wizard, of such dreaded fame,
That when, in Salamanca's cave, 140
Him listed his magic wand to wave,
The bells would ring in Notre Dame !
Some of his skill he taught to me ;
And, Warrior, I could say to thee
The words that cleft Eildon hills in three, 145
And bridled the Tweed with a curb of stone :
But to speak them were a deadly sin ;
And for having but thought them my heart within,
A treble penance must be done.

XIV.

'When Michael lay on his dying bed, 150
His conscience was awakened ;
He bethought him of his sinful deed,
And he gave me a sign to come with speed :
I was in Spain when the morning rose,
But I stood by his bed ere evening close. 155
The words may not again be said,
That he spoke to me, on death-bed laid ;
They would rend this Abbaye's massy nave,
And pile it in heaps above his grave.

XV.

'I swore to bury his Mighty Book, 160
That never mortal might therein look ;
And never to tell where it was hid,
Save at his Chief of Branksome's need :
And when that need was past and o'er,
Again the volume to restore. 165
I buried him on St. Michael's night,
When the bell toll'd one, and the moon was bright,
And I dug his chamber among the dead,
When the floor of the chancel was stained red,
That his patron's cross might over him wave, 170
And scare the fiends from the Wizard's grave.

XVI.

'It was a night of woe and dread,
When Michael in the tomb I laid !
Strange sounds along the chancel pass'd,
The banners waved without a blast'— 175
—Still spoke the Monk, when the bell toll'd one!—
I tell you, that a braver man
Than William of Deloraine, good at need,
Against a foe ne'er spurr'd a steed ;
Yet somewhat was he chill'd with dread, 180
And his hair did bristle upon his head.

XVII.

'Lo, Warrior! now, the Cross of Red
Points to the grave of the mighty dead ;
Within it burns a wondrous light,
To chase the spirits that love the night : 185
That lamp shall burn unquenchably,
Until the eternal doom shall be.'—
Slow moved the Monk to the broad flag-stone,
Which the bloody Cross was traced upon :
He pointed to a secret nook ; 190
An iron bar the Warrior took ;
And the Monk made a sign with his wither'd hand,
The grave's huge portal to expand.

XVIII.

With beating heart to the task he went ;
 His sinewy frame o'er the grave-stone bent ; 195
 With bar of iron heaved amain,
 Till the toil-drops fell from his brows, like rain.
 It was by dint of passing strength,
 That he moved the massy stone at length.
 I would you had been there, to see 200
 How the light broke forth so gloriously,
 Stream'd upward to the chancel roof,
 And through the galleries far aloof!
 No earthly flame blazed e'er so bright :
 It shone like heaven's own blessed light, 205
 And, issuing from the tomb,
 Show'd the Monk's cowl, and visage pale,
 Danced on the dark-brow'd Warrior's mail,
 And kiss'd his waving plume.

XIX.

Before their eyes the Wizard lay, 210
 As if he had not been dead a day.
 His hoary beard in silver roll'd,
 He seem'd some seventy winters old ;
 A palmer's amice wrapp'd him round,
 With a wrought Spanish baldric bound, 215
 ' Like a pilgrim from beyond the sea :
 His left hand held his Book of Might ;
 A silver cross was in his right ;
 The lamp was placed beside his knee :
 High and majestic was his look, 220
 At which the fellest fiend had shook,
 And all unruffled was his face :
 They trusted his soul had gotten grace.

XX.

Often had William of Deloraine
 Rode through the battle's bloody plain, 225
 And trampled down the warriors slain,

And neither known remorse nor awe;•
 Yet now remorse and awe he own'd;
 His breath came thick, his head swam round,
 When this strange scene of death he saw, 230
 Bewilder'd and unnerv'd he stood,
 And the priest pray'd fervently and loud:
 With eyes averted prayed he;
 He might not endure the sight to see,
 Of the man he had loved so brotherly. 235

XXI.

And when the priest his death-prayer had pray'd,
 Thus unto Deloraine he said:—
 'Now, speed thee what thou hast to do,
 Or, Warrior, we may dearly rue;
 For those, thou may'st not look upon, 240
 Are gathering fast round the yawning stone!—
 Then Deloraine, in terror, took
 From the cold hand the Mighty Book,
 With iron clasp'd, and with iron bound:
 He thought, as he took it, the dead man frown'd; 245
 But the glare of the sepulchral light,
 Perchance, had dazzled the warrior's sight.

XXII.

When the huge stone sunk o'er the tomb,
 The night return'd in double gloom; 249
 For the moon had gone down, and the stars were few;
 And, as the Knight and Priest withdrew,
 With wavering steps and dizzy brain,
 They hardly might the postern gain.
 'Tis said, as through the aisles they pass'd,
 They heard strange noises on the blast; 255
 And through the cloister-galleries small,
 Which at mid-height thread the chancel wall,
 Loud sobs, and laughter louder, ran,
 And voices unlike the voice of man;

As if the fiends kept holiday, 260
 Because these spells were brought to day.
 I cannot tell how the truth may be;
 I say the tale as 'twas said to me.

XXIII.

'Now, hie thee hence,' the Father said,
 'And when we are on death-bed laid, 265
 O may our dear Ladye, and sweet St. John,
 Forgive our souls for the deed we have done!'
 The Monk return'd him to his cell,—
 And many a prayer and penance sped;
 When the convent met at the noontide bell— 270
 The Monk of St. Mary's aisle was dead!
 Before the cross was the body laid,
 With hands clasp'd fast, as if still he pray'd.

XXIV.

The Knight breathed free in the morning wind,
 And strove his hardihood to find: 275
 He was glad when he pass'd the tombstones grey,
 Which girdle round the fair Abbaye;
 For the mystic Book, to his bosom prest,
 Felt like a load upon his breast;
 And his joints, with nerves of iron twined, 280
 Shook, like the aspen leaves in wind.
 Full fain was he when the dawn of day
 Began to brighten Cheviot grey;
 He joy'd to see the cheerful light,
 And he said Ave Mary, as well as he might. 285

XXV.

The sun had brighten'd Cheviot grey,
 The sun had brighten'd the Carter's side;
 And soon beneath the rising day
 Smiled Branksome Towers and Teviot's tide.
 The wild birds told their warbling tale, 290
 And waken'd every flower that blows;
 And peeped forth the violet pale,

And spread her breast the mountain rose.
 And lovelier than the rose so red,
 Yet paler than the violet pale, 295
 She early left her sleepless bed,
 The fairest maid of Teviotdale. ✕

XXVI.

Why does fair Margaret so early awake,
 And don her kirtle so hastilie; 299
 And the silken knots, which in hurry she would make,
 Why tremble her slender fingers to tie;
 Why does she stop, and look often around,
 As she glides down the secret stair;
 And why does she pat the shaggy blood-hound,
 As she rouses him up from his lair; 305
 And, though she passes the postern alone,
 Why is not the watchman's bugle blown?

XXVII.

The Ladye steps in doubt and dread,
 Lest her watchful mother hear her tread;
 The Ladye caresses the rough blood-hound, 310
 Lest his voice should waken the castle round;
 The watchman's bugle is not blown,
 For he was her foster-father's son;
 And she glides through the greenwood at dawn of light
 To meet Baron Henry, her own true knight. 315

XXVIII.

The Knight and Ladye fair are met,
 And under the hawthorn's boughs are set.
 A fairer pair were never seen
 To meet beneath the hawthorn green.
 He was stately, and young, and tall; 320
 Dreaded in battle, and loved in hall:
 And she, when love, scarce told, scarce hid,
 Lent to her cheek a livelier red;
 When the half sigh her swelling breast
 Against the silken ribbon prest; 325

When her blue eyes their secret told,
 Though shaded by her locks of gold—
 Where would you find the peerless fair,
 With Margaret of Branksome might compare!

XXIX.

And now, fair dames, methinks I see 330
 You listen to my minstrelsy;
 Your waving locks ye backward throw,
 And sidelong bend your necks of snow:
 Ye ween to hear a melting tale,
 Of two true lovers in a dale; 335
 And how the Knight, with tender fire,
 To paint his faithful passion strove;
 Swore he might at her feet expire,
 But never, never cease to love;
 And how she blush'd and how she sigh'd, 340
 And, half consenting, half denied,
 And said that she would die a maid;—
 Yet, might the bloody feud be stay'd,
 Henry of Cranstoun, and only he,
 Margaret of Branksome's choice should be. 345

XXX.

Alas! fair dames, your hopes are vain!
 My harp has lost the enchanting strain;
 Its lightness would my age reprove:
 My hairs are grey, my limbs are old,
 My heart is dead, my veins are cold: 350
 I may not, must not, sing of love.

XXXI.

Beneath an oak, moss'd o'er by eld,
 The Baron's Dwarf his courser held,
 And held his crested helm and spear:
 That Dwarf was scarce an earthly man, 355
 If the tales were true that of him ran
 Through all the Border, far and near.

'Twas said, when the Baron a-hunting rode
 Through Reedsdale's glens, but rarely trode,
 He heard a voice cry, 'Lost! lost! lost!' 360
 And, like tennis-ball by racket toss'd,
 A leap, of thirty feet and three,
 Made from the gorse this elfin shape,
Distorted like some dwarfish ape,
 And lighted at Lord Cranstoun's knee. 365
 Lord Cranstoun was some whit dismay'd;
 'Tis said that five good miles he rade,
 To rid him of his company;
 But where he rode one mile, the Dwarf ran four,
 And the Dwarf was first at the castle door. 370

XXXII.

Use lessens marvel, it is said:
 This elvish Dwarf with the Baron staid;
 Little he ate, and less he spoke,
 Nor mingled with the menial flock:
 And oft apart his arms he toss'd, 375
 And often mutter'd 'Lost! lost! lost!'
 He was waspish, arch, and litherlie,
 But well Lord Cranstoun served he:
 And he of his service was full fain;
 For once he had been ta'en or slain, 380
 An it had not been for his ministry.
 All between Home and Hermitage,
 Talk'd of Lord Cranstoun's Goblin-Page.

XXXIII.

For the Baron went on pilgrimage,
 And took with him this elvish Page, 385
 To Mary's Chapel of the Lowes:
 For there, beside our Lady's lake,
 An offering he had sworn to make,
 And he would pay his vows.

But the Ladye of Branksome gather'd a band 390
Of the best that would ride at her command:

The trysting place was Newark Lee.
Wat of Harden came thither amain,
And thither came John of Thirlestane,
And thither came William of Deloraine; 395

They were three hundred spears and three.
Through Douglas-burn, up Yarrow stream,
Their horses prance, their lances gleam.
They came to St. Mary's lake ere day;
But the chapel was void, and the Baron away. 400
They burn'd the chapel for very rage,
And cursed Lord Cranstoun's Goblin-Page.

XXXIV.

And now, in Branksome's good greenwood,
As under the aged oak he stood,
The Baron's courser pricks his ears, 405
As if a distant noise he hears.
The Dwarf waves his long lean arm on high,
And signs to the lovers to part and fly:
No time was then to vow or sigh.
Fair Margaret through the hazel grove, 410
Flew like the startled cushat-dove:
The Dwarf the stirrup held and rein;
Vaulted the Knight on his steed amain,
And, pondering deep that morning's scene,
Rode eastward through the hawthorns green. 415

WHILE thus he pour'd the lengthen'd tale,
The Minstrel's voice began to fail:
Full slyly smiled the observant page,
And gave the wither'd hand of age
A goblet, crown'd with mighty wine, 420
The blood of Velez' scorched vine.
He raised the silver cup on high,
And, while the big drop fill'd his eye,

Pray'd God to bless the Duchess long,
And all who cheer'd a son of song.
The attending maidens smiled to see
How long, how deep, how zealously,
The precious juice the Minstrel quaff'd;
And he, embolden'd by the draught,
Look'd gaily back to them, and laugh'd.
The cordial nectar of the bowl
Swell'd his old veins, and cheer'd his soul;
A lighter, livelier prelude ran,
Ere thus his tale again began.

425

430

CANTO THIRD.

I.

And said I that my limbs were old,
 And said I that my blood was cold,
 And that my kindly fire was fled,
 And my poor wither'd heart was dead,
 And that I might not sing of love?— 5
 How could I, to the dearest theme
 That ever warm'd a minstrel's dream,
 So foul, so false a recreant prove!
 How could I name love's very name,
 Nor wake my heart to notes of flame! 10

II.

In peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed;
 In war, he mounts the warrior's steed;
 In halls, in gay attire is seen;
 In hamlets, dances on the green.
 Love rules the court, the camp, the grove, 15
 And men below, and saints above;
 For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

III.

So thought Lord Cranstoun, as I ween,
 While, pondering deep the tender scene,
 He rode through Branksome's hawthorn green. 20
 But the page shouted wild and shrill,
 And scarce his helmet could he don,
 When downward from the shady hill
 A stately knight came pricking on.
 That warrior's steed, so dapple-grey, 25
 Was dark with sweat, and splash'd with clay;

His armour red with many a stain :
 He seem'd in such a weary plight,
 As if he had ridden the live-long night ;
 For it was William of Deloraine.

30

IV.

But no whit weary did he seem,
 When, dancing in the sunny beam,
 He mark'd the crane on the Baron's crest ;
 For his ready spear was in his rest.

Few were the words, and stern and high,

35

That mark'd the foeman's feudal hate ;

For question fierce, and proud reply,

Gave signal soon of dire debate.

Their very coursers seem'd to know

That each was other's mortal foe,

40

And snorted fire when wheel'd around,

To give each knight his vantage-ground.

V.

In rapid round the Baron bent ;

He sigh'd a sigh, and pray'd a prayer ;

The prayer was to his patron saint,

45

The sigh was to his ladye fair.

Stout Deloraine nor sigh'd nor pray'd,

Nor saint, nor ladye, call'd to aid ;

But he stoop'd his head, and couch'd his spear,

And spurr'd his steed to full career.

50

The meeting of these champions proud

Seem'd like the bursting thunder-cloud.

VI.

Stern was the dint the Borderer lent !

The stately Baron backwards bent ;

Bent backwards to his horse's tail,

55

And his plumes went scattering on the gale ;

The tough ash spear, so stout and true,

Into a thousand flinders flew.

But Cranstoun's lance, of more avail,
Pierced through, like silk, the Borderer's mail; 60
Through shield, and jack, and acton, past,
Deep in his bosom broke at last.—
Still sate the warrior, saddle-fast,
Till, stumbling in the mortal shock,
Down went the steed, the girthing broke, 65
Hurl'd on a heap lay man and horse.
The Baron onward pass'd his course;
Nor knew—so giddy roll'd his brain—
His foe lay stretch'd upon the plain.

VII.

But when he rein'd his courser round, 70
And saw his foeman on the ground
Lie senseless as the bloody clay,
He bade his page to stanch the wound,
And there beside the warrior stay, 75
And tend him in his doubtful state,
And lead him to Branksome castle-gate:
His noble mind was inly moved
For the kinsman of the maid he loved.
'This shalt thou do without delay:
No longer here myself may stay; 80
Unless the swifter I speed away,
Short shrift will be at my dying day.'

VIII.

Away in speed Lord Cranstoun rode;
The Goblin Page behind abode;
His lord's command he ne'er withstood, 85
Though small his pleasure to do good.
As the corslet off he took,
The dwarf espied the Mighty Book!
Much he marvell'd a knight of pride,
Like a book-bosom'd priest should ride: 90
He thought not to search or stanch the wound,
Until the secret he had found.

IX.

The iron band, the iron clasp,
 Resisted long the elfin grasp :
 For when the first he had undone, 95
 It closed as he the next begun.
 Those iron clasps, that iron band,
 Would not yield to unchristen'd hand,
 Till he smear'd the cover o'er
 With the Borderer's curdled gore ; 100
 A moment then the volume spread,
 And one short spell therein he read,
 It had much of glamour might,
 Could make a ladye seem a knight ;
 The cobwebs on a dungeon wall 105
 Seem tapestry in lordly hall ;
 A nut-shell seem a gilded barge,
 A sheeling seem a palace large,
 And youth seem age, and age seem youth—
 All was delusion, nought was truth. 110

X.

He had not read another spell,
 When on his cheek a buffet fell,
 So fierce, it stretch'd him on the plain,
 Beside the wounded Deloraine.
 From the ground he rose dismay'd, 115
 And shook his huge and matted head ;
 One word he mutter'd, and no more,
 'Man of age, thou smitest sore !'—
 No more the Elfin Page durst try
 Into the wondrous Book to pry ; 120
 The clasps, though smear'd with Christian gore,
 Shut faster than they were before.
 He hid it underneath his cloak.—
 Now, if you ask who gave the stroke,
 I cannot tell, so mot I thrive ; 125
 It was not given by man alive.

XI.

Unwillingly himself he address'd,
To do his master's high behest :
He lifted up the living corse,
And laid it on the weary horse ; 130
He led him into Branksome Hall,
Before the beards of the warders all ;
And each did after swear and say,
There only pass'd a wain of hay.
He took him to Lord David's tower, 135
Even to the Ladye's secret bower ;
And, but that stronger spells were spread,
And the door might not be opened,
He had laid him on her very bed.
Whate'er he did of gramarye, 140
Was always done maliciously ;
He flung the warrior on the ground,
And the blood well'd freshly from the wound.

XII.

As he repass'd the outer court,
He spied the fair young child at sport : 145
He thought to train him to the wood ;
For, at a word, be it understood,
He was always for ill, and never for good.
Seem'd to the boy, some comrade gay
Led him forth to the woods to play ; 150
On the drawbridge the warders stout
Saw a terrier and lurcher passing out.

XIII.

He led the boy o'er bank and fell,
Until they came to a woodland brook ;
The running stream dissolved the spell, 155
And his own elvish shape he took.
Could he have had his pleasure vilde,
He had crippled the joints of the noble child ;

Or, with his fingers long and lean,
Had strangled him in fiendish spleen : 160
But his awful mother he had in dread,
And also his power was limited ;
So he but scowl'd on the startled child,
And darted through the forest wild ;
The woodland brook he bounding cross'd, 165
And laugh'd, and shouted, ' Lost ! lost ! lost ! '—

XIV.

Full sore amaz'd at the wondrous change,
And frighten'd as a child might be,
At the wild yell and visage strange,
And the dark words of gramarye, 170
The child, amidst the forest bower,
Stood rooted like a lily flower ;
And when at length, with trembling pace,
He sought to find where Branksome lay,
He fear'd to see that grisly face 175
Glare from some thicket on his way.
Thus, starting oft, he journey'd on,
And deeper in the wood is gone,—
For aye the more he sought his way,
The farther still he went astray,— 180
Until he heard the mountains round
Ring to the baying of a hound.

XV.

And hark ! and hark ! the deep-mouth'd bark
Comes nigher still, and nigher :
Bursts on the path a dark blood-hound, 185
His tawny muzzle track'd the ground,
And his red eye shot fire.
Soon as the wilder'd child saw he,
He flew at him right furiously.
I ween you would have seen with joy 190
The bearing of the gallant boy,
When, worthy of his noble sire,
His wet cheek glow'd 'twixt fear and ire !

He faced the blood-hound manfully,
 And held his little bat on high ; 195
 So fierce he struck, the dog, afraid,
 At cautious distance hoarsely bay'd,
 But still in act to spring ;
 When dash'd an archer through the glade,
 And when he saw the hound was stay'd, 200
 He drew 'his tough bow-string ;
 But a rough voice cried, 'Shoot not, hoy !
 Ho ! shoot not, Edward—'Tis a boy !'

XVI.

The speaker issued from the wood,
 And check'd his fellow's surly mood, 205
 And quell'd the ban-dog's ire :
 He was an English yeoman good,
 And born in Lancashire.
 Well could he hit a fallow-deer
 Five hundred feet him fro ; 210
 With hand more true, and eye more clear,
 No archer bended bow.
 His coal-black hair, shorn round and close,
 Set off his sun-burn'd face :
 Old England's sign, St. George's cross, 215
 His barret-cap did grace ;
 His bugle-horn hung by his side,
 All in a wolf-skin baldric tied :
 And his short falchion, sharp and clear,
 Had pierced the throat of many a deer. 220

XVII.

His kirtle, made of forest green,
 Reach'd scantily to his knee ;
 And, at his belt, of arrows keen
 A furbish'd sheaf bore he ;
 His buckler, scarce in breadth a span, 225
 No larger fence had he ;

He never counted him a man,
 Would strike below the knee:
 His slacken'd bow was in his hand,
 And the leash, that was his blood-hound's band. 230

XVIII.

He would not do the fair child harm,
 But held him with his powerful arm,
 That he might neither fight nor flee;
 For when the Red-Cross spied he,
 The boy strove long and violently. 235
 'Now, by St. George,' the archer cries,
 'Edward, methinks we have a prize!
 This boy's fair face, and courage free,
 Show he is come of high degree.'—

XIX.

'Yes! I am come of high degree, 240
 For I am the heir of bold Buccleuch;
 And, if thou dost not set me free,
 False Southron, thou shalt dearly rue!
 For Walter of Harden shall come with speed,
 And William of Deloraine, good at need, 245
 And every Scott, from Esk to Tweed;
 And, if thou dost not let me go,
 Despite thy arrows, and thy bow,
 I'll have thee hang'd to feed the crow!'—

XX.

'Gramercy, for thy good-will, fair boy! 250
 My mind was never set so high;
 But if thou art chief of such a clan,
 And art the son of such a man,
 And ever comest to thy command,
 Our wardens had need to keep good order; 255
 My bow of yew to a hazel wand,
 Thou'lt make them work upon the border.

Meantime, be pleased to come with me,
For good Lord Dacre shalt thou see ;
I think our work is well begun, 260
When we have taken thy father's son.'

XXI.

Although the child was led away,
In Branksome still he seem'd to stay,
For so the Dwarf his part did play ;
And, in the shape of that young boy, 265
He wrought the castle much annoy.
The comrades of the young Buccleuch
He pinch'd, and beat, and overthrew ;
Nay, some of them he wellnigh slew.
He tore Dame Maudlin's silken tire, 270
And, as Sym Hall stood by the fire,
He lighted the match of his bandelier,
And wofully scorch'd the hackbuteer.
It may be hardly thought or said,
The mischief that the urchin made, 275
Till many of the castle guess'd,
That the young Baron was possess'd !

XXII.

Well I ween the charm he held
The noble Ladye had soon dispell'd ;
But she was deeply busied then 280
To tend the wounded Deloraine.
Much she wonder'd to find him lie,
On the stone threshold stretch'd along ;
She thought some spirit of the sky
Had done the bold moss-trooper wrong, 285
Because, despite her precept dread,
Perchance he in the book had read ;
But the broken lance in his bosom stood,
And it was earthly steel and wood.

XXIII.

She drew the splinter from the wound, 290
 And with a charm she stanch'd the blood;
 She bade the gash be cleansed and bound:
 No longer by his couch she stood;
 But she has ta'en the broken lance,
 And wash'd it from the clotted gore, 295
 And salved the splinter o'er and o'er.
 William of Deloraine, in trance,
 Whene'er she turn'd it round and round,
 Twisted as if she gall'd his wound.
 Then to her maidens she did say, 300
 That he should be whole man and sound,
 Within the course of a night and day.
 Full long she toil'd; for she did rue
 Mishap to friend so stout and true.

XXIV.

So pass'd the day—the evening fell, 305
 'Twas near the time of curfew bell;
 The air was mild, the wind was calm,
 The stream was smooth, the dew was balm;
 E'en the rude watchman, on the tower,
 Enjoy'd and bless'd the lovely hour. 310
 Far more fair Margaret loved and bless'd
 The hour of silence and of rest.
 On the high turret sitting lone,
 She waked at times the lute's soft tone;
 Touch'd a wild note, and all between 315
 Thought of the bower of hawthorns green.
 Her golden hair stream'd free from band,
 Her fair cheek rested on her hand,
 Her blue eyes sought the west afar,
 For lovers love the western star. 320

XXV.

Is yon the star, o'er Penchryst Pen,
 That rises slowly to her ken,

And, spreading broad its wavering light,
 Shakes its loose tresses on the night?
 Is yon red glare the western star?— 325
 Oh! 'tis the beacon-blaze of war!
 Scarce could she draw her tighten'd breath,
 For well she knew the fire of death!

XXVI.

The warder view'd it blazing strong,
 And blew his war-note loud and long, 330
 Till, at the high and haughty sound,
 Rock, wood, and river, rung around.
 The blast alarm'd the festal hall,
 And startled forth the warriors all;
 Far downward, in the castle-yard, 335
 Full many a torch and cresset glared;
 And helms and plumes, confusedly toss'd,
 Were in the blaze half-seen, half-lost;
 And spears in wild disorder shook,
 Like reeds beside a frozen brook. 340

XXVII.

The Seneschal, whose silver hair
 Was redden'd by the torches' glare,
 Stood in the midst, with gesture proud,
 And issued forth his mandates loud:—
 'On Penchryst glows a bale of fire, 345
 And three are kindling on Priestthaughswire:
 Ride out, ride out,
 The foe to scout!
 Mount, mount for Branksome, every man!
 Thou, Todrig, warn the Johnstone clan, 350
 That ever are true and stout—
 Ye need not send to Liddesdale;
 For when they see the blazing bale,
 Elliots and Armstrongs never fail.—

Ride, Alton, ride, for death and life! 355
 And warn the Warder of the strife.
 Young Gilbert, let our beacon blaze,
 Our kin, and clan, and friends, to raise.'

XXVIII.

Fair Margaret, from the turret head,
 Heard, far below, the coursers' tread, 360
 While loud the harness rung,
 As to their seats, with clamour dread,
 The ready horsemen sprung:
 And trampling hoofs, and iron coats,
 And leaders' voices, mingled notes, 365
 And out! and out!
 In hasty route,
 The horsemen gallop'd forth;
 Dispersing to the south to scout,
 And east, and west, and north, 370
 To view their coming enemies,
 And warn their vassals and allies.

XXIX.

The ready page, with hurried hand,
 Awaked the need-fire's slumbering brand,
 And ruddy blush'd the heaven: 375
 For a sheet of flame, from the turret high,
 Waved like a blood-flag on the sky,
 All flaring and uneven.
 And soon a score of fires, I ween,
 From height, and hill, and cliff, were seen; 380
 Each with warlike tidings fraught;
 Each from each the signal caught;
 Each after each they glanced to sight,
 As stars arise upon the night.
 They gleam'd on many a dusky tarn, 385
 Haunted by the lonely earn;
 On many a cairn's grey pyramid,
 Where urns of mighty chiefs lie hid;

Till high Dunedin the blazes saw,
From Soltra and Dumpender Law ; 390
And Lothian heard the Regent's order,
That all should bowne them for the Border.

XXX.

The livelong night in Branksome rang
The ceaseless sound of steel ;
The castle-bell, with backward clang, 395
Sent forth the larum peal ;
Was frequent heard the heavy jar,
Where massy stone and iron bar
Were piled on echoing keep and tower,
To whelm the foe with deadly shower ; 400
Was frequent heard the changing guard,
And watch-word from the sleepless ward ;
While, wearied by the endless din,
Blood-hound and ban-dog yell'd within.

XXXI.

The noble Dame, amid the broil, 405
Shared the grey Seneschal's high toil,
And spoke of danger with a smile ;
Cheer'd the young knights, and council sage
Held with the chiefs of riper age.
No tidings of the foe were brought, 410
Nor of his numbers knew they aught,
Nor what in time of truce he sought.
Some said that there were thousands ten ;
And others ween'd that it was nought
But Leven Clans, or Tynedale men, 415
Who came to gather in black-mail ;
And Liddesdale, with small avail,
Might drive them lightly back agen.
So pass'd the anxious night away,
And welcome was the peep of day. 420

CEASED the high sound—the listening throng
Applaud the Master of the Song;
And marvel much, in helpless age,
So hard should be his pilgrimage.

Had he no friend—no daughter dear, 425
His wandering toil to share and cheer;

No son to be his father's stay,

And guide him on the rugged way?

'Ay, once he had—but he was dead!'

Upon the harp he stoop'd his head, 430

And busied himself the strings withal,

To hide the tear that fain would fall.

In solemn measure, soft and slow,

Arose a father's notes of woe.

CANTO FOURTH.

I.

SWEET Teviot! on thy silver tide
The glaring bale-fires blaze no more;
No longer steel-clad warriors ride
Along thy wild and willow'd shore;
Where'er thou wind'st, by dale or hill, 5
All, all is peaceful, all is still,
As if thy waves, since Time was born,
Since first they roll'd upon the Tweed,
Had only heard the shepherd's reed,
Nor started at the bugle-horn. 10

II.

Unlike the tide of human time,
Which, though it change in ceaseless flow,
Retains each grief, retains each crime
Its earliest course was doom'd to know;
And, darker as it downward bears, 15
Is stain'd with past and present tears.
Low as that tide has ebb'd with me,
It still reflects to Memory's eye
The hour my brave, my only boy,
Fell by the side of great Dundee. 20
Why, when the volleying musket play'd
Against the bloody Highland blade,
Why was not I beside him laid!—
Enough—he died the death of fame;
Enough—he died with conquering Græme. 25

III.

Now over Border, dale and fell,
Full wide and far was terror spread;
For pathless marsh, and mountain cell,
The peasant left his lowly shed.

The frighten'd flocks and herds were pent 30
 Beneath the peel's rude battlement;
 And maids and matrons dropp'd the tear,
 While ready warriors seized the spear.
 From Branksome's towers, the watchman's eye
 Dun wreaths of distant smoke can spy, 35
 Which, curling in the rising sun,
 Show'd southern ravage was begun.

IV.

Now loud the heedful gate-ward cried—
 'Prepare ye all for blows and blood!
 Watt Tinlinn, from the Liddel-side, 40
 Comes wading through the flood.
 Full oft the Tynedale snatchers knock
 At his lone gate, and prove the lock;
 It was but last St. Barnabright
 They sieged him a whole summer night, 45
 But fled at morning; well they knew,
 In vain he never twang'd the yew.
 Right sharp has been the evening shower,
 That drove him from his Liddel tower;
 And, by my faith,' the gate-ward said, 50
 'I think 'twill prove a Warden-Raid.'

V.

While thus he spoke, the bold yeoman
 Enter'd the echoing barbican.
 He led a small and shaggy nag,
 That through a bog, from hag to hag, 55
 Could bound like any Billhope stag.
 It bore his wife and children twain;
 A half-clothed serf was all their train;
 His wife, stout, ruddy, and dark-brow'd,
 Of silver brooch and bracelet proud, 60
 Laugh'd to her friends among the crowd.
 He was of stature passing tall,
 But sparely form'd, and lean withal;

A batter'd morion on his brow ;
 A leather jack, as fence enow, 65
 On his broad shoulders loosely hung ;
 A border axe behind was slung ;
 His spear, six Scottish ells in length,
 Seem'd newly dyed with gore ;
 His shafts and bow, of wondrous strength, 70
 His hardy partner bore.

VI.

Thus to the Ladye did Tinlinn show
 The tidings of the English foe :—
 'Belted Will Howard is marching here,
 And hot Lord Dacre, with many a spear,— 75
 And all the German hackbut-men,
 Who have long lain at Askerten :
 They cross'd the Liddel at curfew hour,
 And burn'd my little lonely tower :
 The fiend receive their souls therefor ! 80
 It had not been burnt this year and more.
 Barn-yard and dwelling, blazing bright,
 Served to guide me on my flight ;
 But I was chased the livelong night.
 Black John of Akeshaw, and Fergus Græme, 85
 Fast upon my traces came,
 Until I turn'd at Priestthaugh Scrogg,
 And shot their horses in the bog,
 Slew Fergus with my lance outright—
 I had him long at high despite : 90
 He drove my cows last Fastern's night.'

VII.

Now weary scouts from Liddesdale,
 Fast hurrying in, confirm'd the tale ;
 As far as they could judge by ken,
 Three hours would bring to Teviot's strand 95
 Three thousand armed Englishmen—
 Meanwhile, full many a warlike band,

From Teviot, Aill, and Ettrick shade,
Came in, their Chief's defence to aid.

There was saddling and mounting in haste, 100

There was pricking o'er moor and lea;

He that was last at the trysting-place

Was but lightly held of his gay ladye.

VIII.

From fair St. Mary's silver wave,

From dreary Gamescleugh's dusky height, 105

His ready lances Thirlestane brave

Array'd beneath a banner bright.

The treasured fleur-de-luce he claims,

To wreath his shield, since Royal James,

Encamp'd by Fala's mossy wave, 110

The proud distinction grateful gave,

For faith 'mid feudal jars;

What time, save Thirlestane alone,

Of Scotland's stubborn barons none

Would march to southern wars; 115

And hence, in fair remembrance worn,

Yon sheaf of spears his crest has borne;

Hence his high motto shines reveal'd—

'Ready, aye ready,' for the field.

IX.

An aged Knight, to danger steel'd, 120

With many a moss-trooper came on:

And azure in a golden field,

The stars and crescent graced his shield,

Without the bend of Murdieston.

Wide lay his lands round Oakwood tower, 125

And wide round haunted Castle-Ower;

High over Borthwick's mountain flood,

His wood-embosom'd mansion stood;

In the dark glen, so deep below,

The herds of plunder'd England low; 130

His bold retainer's daily food,
 And bought with danger, blows, and blood.
 Marauding chief! his sole delight
 The moonlight raid, the morning fight;
 Not even the Flower of Yarrow's charms, 135
 In youth, might tame his rage for arms;
 And still, in age, he spurn'd at rest,
 And still his brows the helmet press'd,
 Albeit the blanched locks below
 Were white as Dinlay's spotless snow: 140
 Five stately warriors drew the sword
 Before their father's band;
 A braver knight than Harden's lord
 Ne'er belted on a brand.

X.

Scotts of Eskdale, a stalwart band, 145
 Came trooping down the Todshawhill;
 By the sword they won their land,
 And by the sword they hold it still.
 Hearken, Ladye, to the tale,
 How thy sires won fair Eskdale.— 150
 Earl Morton was lord of that valley fair,
 The Beattisons were his vassals there.
 The Earl was gentle, and mild of mood,
 The vassals were warlike, and fierce, and rude;
 High of heart, and haughty of word, 155
 Little they reck'd of a tame liege Lord.
 The Earl into fair Eskdale came
 Homage and seignory to claim:
 Of Gilbert the Galliard a heriot he sought,
 Saying, 'Give thy best steed, as a vassal ought.' 160
 —'Dear to me is my bonny white steed,
 Oft has he help'd me at pinch of need;
 Lord and Earl though thou be, I trow
 I can rein Bucksfoot better than thou.'—
 Word on word gave fuel to fire, 165
 Till so highly blazed the Beattison's ire,

But that the Earl the flight had ta'en,
 The vassals there their lord had slain.
 Sore he plied both whip and spur,
 As he urged his steed through Eskdale muir; 170
 And it fell down a weary weight,
 Just on the threshold of Branksome gate.

XI.

The Earl was a wrathful man to see,
 Full fain avenged would he be.
 In haste to Branksome's Lord he spoke, 175
 Saying, 'Take these traitors to thy yoke;
 For a cast of hawks, and a purse of gold,
 All Eskdale I'll sell thee, to have and hold:
 Beshrew thy heart, of the Beattisons' clan
 If thou leavest on Eske a landed man; 180
 But spare Woodkerrick's lands alone,
 For he lent me his horse to escape upon.'
 A glad man then was Branksome bold,
 Down he flung him the purse of gold;
 To Eskdale soon he spurr'd amain, 185
 And with him five hundred riders has ta'en.
 He left his merry men in the midst of the hill,
 And bade them hold them close and still;
 And alone he wended to the plain,
 To meet with the Galliard and all his train. 190
 To Gilbert the Galliard thus he said:—
 'Know thou me for thy liege-lord and head;
 Deal not with me as with Morton tame,
 For Scotts play best at the roughest game.
 Give me in peace my heriot due, 195
 Thy bonny white steed, or thou shalt rue.
 If my horn I three times wind,
 Eskdale shall long have the sound in mind.'—

XII.

Loudly the Beattison laugh'd in scorn;
 'Little care we for thy winded horn. 200

Ne'er shall it be the Galliard's lot,
 To yield his steed to a haughty Scott
 Wend thou to Branksome back on foot,
 With rusty spur and miry boot.'—
 He blew his bugle so loud and hoarse, 205
 That the dun deer started at fair Craikcross;
 He blew again so loud and clear,
 Through the grey mountain-mist there did lances appear;
 And the third blast rang with such a din,
 That the echoes answer'd from Pentoun-linn, 210
 And all his riders came lightly in.
 Then had you seen a gallant shock,
 When saddles were emptied, and lances broke!
 For each scornful word the Galliard had said,
 A Beattison on the field was laid. 215
 His own good sword the chieftain drew,
 And he bore the Galliard through and through;
 Where the Beattisons' blood mix'd with the rill,
 The Galliard's-Haugh men call it still.
 The Scotts have scatter'd the Beattison clan, 220
 In Eskdale they left but one landed man.
 The valley of Eske, from the mouth to the source,
 Was lost and won for that bonny white horse.

XIII.

Whitslade the Hawk, and Headshaw came,
 And warriors more than I may name; 225
 From Yarrow-cleugh to Hindhaugh-swair,
 From Woodhouslie to Chester-glen,
 Troop'd man and horse, and bow and spear;
 Their gathering word was Bellenden.
 And better hearts o'er Border sod 230
 To siege or rescue never rode.
 The Ladye mark'd the aids come in,
 And high her heart of pride arose:
 She bade her youthful son attend,
 That he might know his father's friend, 235
 And learn to face his foes.

'The boy is ripe to look on war;
I saw him draw a cross-bow stiff,
And his true arrow struck afar
The raven's nest upon the cliff; 240
The red cross, on a southern breast,
Is broader than the raven's nest:
Thou, Whitslade, shalt teach him his weapon to wield,
And o'er him hold his father's shield.'

XIV.

Well may you think, the wily page 245
Cared not to face the Ladye sage.
He counterfeited childish fear,
And shriek'd, and shed full many a tear,
And moan'd and plain'd in manner wild.
The attendants to the Ladye told, 250
Some fairy, sure, had changed the child,
That wont to be so free and bold.
Then wrathful was the noble dame;
She blush'd blood-red for very shame:—
'Hence! ere the clan his faintness view; 255
Hence with the weakling to Buccleuch!—
Watt Tinlinn, thou shalt be his guide
To Rangleburn' slonely side.—
Sure some fell fiend has cursed our line,
That coward should e'er be son of mine!'— 260

XV.

A heavy task Watt Tinlinn had,
To guide the counterfeited lad.
Soon as the palfrey felt the weight
Of that ill-omen'd elfish freight,
He bolted, sprung, and rear'd amain, 265
Nor heeded bit, nor curb, nor rein.
It cost Watt Tinlinn mickle toil
To drive him but a Scottish mile;

But as a shallow brook they cross'd,
 The elf, amid the running stream, 270
 His figure chang'd, like form in dream,
 And fled, and shouted, 'Lost! lost! lost!'

Full fast the urchin ran and laugh'd,
 But faster still a cloth-yard shaft
 Whistled from startled Tinlinn's yew, 275
 And pierced his shoulder through and through.
 Although the imp might not be slain,
 And though the wound soon heal'd again,
 Yet, as he ran, he yell'd for pain;
 And Watt of Tinlinn, much aghast, 280
 Rode back to Branksome fiery fast.

XVI.

Soon on the hill's steep verge he stood,
 That looks o'er Branksome's towers and wood;
 And martial murmurs, from below,
 Proclaim'd the approaching southern foe. 285
 Through the dark wood, in mingled tone,
 Were Border pipes and bugles blown;
 The coursers' neighing he could ken,
 A measured tread of marching men;
 While broke at times the solemn hum 290
 The Almayn's sullen kettle-drum;
 And banners tall, of crimson sheen,
 Above the copse appear;
 And, glistening through the hawthorns green,
 Shine helm, and shield, and spear. 295

XVII.

Light forayers, first, to view the ground,
 Spurr'd their fleet couisers loosely round;
 Behind, in close array, and fast,
 The Kendal archers, all in green,
 Obedient to the bugle blast, 300
 Advancing from the wood were seen.
 To back and guard the archer band,
 Lord Dacre's bill-men were at hand:

A hardy race, on Irthing bred,
With kirtles white, and crosses red, 305
Array'd beneath the banner tall,
That stream'd o'er Acre's conquer'd wall;
And minstrels, as they march'd in order,
Play'd, 'Noble Lord Dacre, he dwells on the Border.'

XVIII.

Behind the English bill and bow, 310
The mercenaries, firm and slow,
Moved on to fight, in dark array,
By Conrad led of Wolfenstein,
Who brought the band from distant Rhine,
And sold their blood for foreign pay. 315
The camp their home, their law the sword,
They knew no country, own'd no lord:
They were not arm'd like England's sons,
But bore the levin-darting guns;
Buff coats, all frounced and 'broider'd o'er, 320
And morsing-horns and scarfs they wore;
Each better knee was bared, to aid
The warriors in the escalade;
All, as they march'd, in rugged tongue,
Songs of Teutonic feuds they sung. 325

XIX.

But louder still the clamour grew,
And louder still the minstrels blew,
When, from beneath the greenwood tree,
Rode forth Lord Howard's chivalry;
His men-at-arms, with glaive and spear, 330
Brought up the battle's glittering rear.
There many a youthful knight, full keen
To gain his spurs, in arms was seen;
With favour in his crest, or glove,
Memorial of his ladye-love. 335.

So rode they forth in fair array,
 Till full their lengthen'd lines display;
 Then call'd a halt, and made a stand,
 And cried 'St. George for merry England!'

XX.

Now every English eye, intent	340
On Branksome's armed towers was bent ;	
So near they were, that they might know	
The straining harsh of each cross-bow ;	
On battlement and bartizan	
Gleam'd axe, and spear, and partisan ;	345
Falcon and culver, on each tower,	
Stood prompt their deadly hail to shower ;	
And flashing armour frequent broke	
From eddying whirls of sable smoke,	
Where upon tower and turret-head,	350
The seething pitch and molten lead	
Reek'd, like a witch's caldron red.	
While yet they gaze, the bridges fall,	
The wicket opes, and from the wall	
Rides forth the hoary Seneschal.	355

XXI.

Armed he rode, all save the head,	
His white beard o'er his breast-plate spread ;	
Unbroke by age, erect his seat,	
He rul'd his eager courser's gait ;	
Forced him, with chasten'd fire, to prance,	360
And, high curvetting, slow advance :	
In sign of truce, his better hand	
Display'd a peeled willow wand ;	
His squire, attending in the rear,	
Bore high a gauntlet on a spear.	365
When they espied him riding out,	
Lord Howard and Lord Dacre stout	
Sped to the front of their array,	
To hear what this old knight should say.	

XXII.

'Ye English warden lords, of you
 Demands the Ladye of Buccleuch,
 Why, 'gainst the truce of Border tide,
 In hostile guise ye dare to ride,
 With Kendal bow, and Gilsland brand,
 And all yon mercenary band,
 Upon the bounds of fair Scotland?
 My Ladye reads you swith return;
 And, if but one poor straw you burn,
 Or do our towers so much molest
 As scare one swallow from her nest,
 St. Mary! but we'll light a brand
 Shall warm your hearths in Cumberland.'—

XXIII.

A wrathful man was Dacre's lord,
 But calmer Howard took the word:
 'May't please thy Dame, Sir Seneschal,
 To seek the castle's outward wall,
 Our pursuivant-at-arms shall show
 Both why we came, and when we go.'—
 The message sped, the noble Dame
 To the wall's outward circle came;
 Each chief around lean'd on his spear,
 To see the pursuivant appear.
 All in Lord Howard's livery dress'd,
 The lion argent deck'd his breast;
 He led a boy of blooming hue—
 O sight to meet a mother's view!
 It was the heir of great Buccleuch.
 Obeisance meet the herald made,
 And thus his master's will he said:—

XXIV.

'It irks, high Dame, my noble Lords,
 'Gainst ladye fair to draw their swords;
 But yet they may not tamely see,
 All through the Western Wardenry,

Your law-contemning kinsmen ride,
 And burn and spoil the Border-side ; 405
 And ill beseems your rank and birth
 To make your towers a flemens-firth.
 We claim from thee William of Deloraine,
 That he may suffer march-treason pain.
 It was but last St. Cuthbert's even 410
 He prick'd to Stapleton on Leven,
 Harried the lands of Richard Musgrave,
 And slew his brother by dint of glaive.
 Then, since a lone and widow'd Dame
 These restless riders may not tame, 415
 Either receive within thy towers
 Two hundred of my master's powers,
 Or straight they sound their warrison,
 And storm and spoil thy garrison :
 And this fair boy, to London led, 420
 Shall good King Edward's page be bred.'

XXV.

He ceased—and loud the boy did cry,
 And stretch'd his little arms on high ;
 Implored for aid each well-known face,
 And strove to seek the Dame's embrace. 425
 A moment changed that Ladye's cheer,
 Gush'd to her eye the unbidden tear ;
 She gazed upon the leaders round,
 And dark and sad each warrior frown'd ;
 Then, deep within her sobbing breast 430
 She lock'd the struggling sigh to rest ;
 Unalter'd and collected stood,
 And thus replied, in dauntless mood :—

XXVI.

'Say to your Lords of high emprise,
 Who war on women and on boys, 435
 That either William of Deloraine
 Will cleanse him, by oath, of march-treason stain,

Or else he will the combat take
 'Gainst Musgrave, for his honour's sake.
 No knight in Cumberland so good, 440
 But William may count with him kin and blood.
 Knighthood he took of Douglas' sword,
 When English blood swell'd Ancram's ford;
 And, but Lord Dacre's steed was wight,
 And bare him ably in the flight, 445
 Himself had seen him dubb'd a knight.
 For the young heir of Branksome's line,
 God be his aid, and God be mine;
 Through me no friend shall meet his doom;
 Here, while I live, no foe finds room. 450
 Then, if thy Lords their purpose urge,
 Take our defiance loud and high;
 Our slogan is their lyke-wake dirge,
 Our moat, the grave where they shall lie.'

XXVII.

Proud she look'd round, applause to claim— 455
 Then lighten'd Thirlestane's eye of flame;
 His bugle Wat of Harden blew;
 Pensils and pennons wide were flung,
 To heaven the Border slogan rung,
 'St. Mary for the young Buccleuch?' 460
 The English war-cry answer'd wide,
 And forward bent each southern spear;
 Each Kendal archer made a stride,
 And drew the bowstring to his ear;
 Each minstrel's war-note loud was blown;— 465
 But, ere a gray-goose shaft had flown,
 A horseman gallop'd from the rear.

XXVIII.

'Ah! noble Lords!' he breathless said,
 'What treason has your march betray'd?
 What make you here, from aid so far, 470
 Before you walls, around you war?

Your foemen triumph in the thought,
 That in the toils the lion's caught.
 Already on dark Ruberslaw
 The Douglas holds his weapon-schaw; 475
 The lances, waving in his train,
 Clothe the dun heath like autumn grain;
 And on the Liddel's northern strand,
 To bar retreat to Cumberland,
 Lord Maxwell ranks his merry men good, 480
 Beneath the eagle and the rood;
 And Jedwood, Eske, and Teviotdale,
 Have to proud Angus come;
 And all the Merse and Lauderdale
 Have risen with haughty Home. 485
 An exile from Northumberland,
 In Liddesdale I've wander'd long;
 But still my heart was with merry England,
 And cannot brook my country's wrong;
 And hard I've spurr'd all night, to show 490
 The mustering of coming foe.'

XXIX.

'And let them come!' fierce Dacre cried;
 'For soon yon crest, my father's pride,
 That swept the shores of Judah's sea,
 And waved in gales of Galilee, 495
 From Branksome's highest towers display'd,
 Shall mock the rescue's lingering aid!—
 Level each harquebuss on row;
 Draw, merry archers, draw the bow;
 Up, bill-men, to the walls, and cry, 500
 Dacre for England, win or die!'—

XXX.

'Yet hear,' quoth Howard, 'calmly hear,
 Nor deem my words the words of fear:
 For who, in field or foray slack,
 Saw the blanche lion e'er fall back? 505

But thus to risk our Border flower
 In strife against a kingdom's power,
 Ten thousand Scots 'gainst thousands three,
 Certes, were desperate policy.
 Nay, take the terms the Ladye made, 510
 Ere conscious of the advancing aid:
 Let Musgrave meet fierce Deloraine
 In single fight; and, if he gain,
 He gains for us; but if he's cross'd,
 'Tis but a single warrior lost: 515
 The rest, retreating as they came,
 Avoid defeat, and death, and shame.'

XXXI.

Ill could the haughty Dacre brook
 His brother Warden's sage rebuke;
 And yet his forward step he staid, 520
 And slow and sullenly obeyed.
 But ne'er again the Border side
 Did these two lords in friendship ride;
 And this slight discontent, men say,
 Cost blood upon another day. 525

XXXII.

The pursuivant-at-arms again
 Before the castle took his stand;
 His trumpet call'd, with parleying strain,
 The leaders of the Scottish band;
 And he defied, in Musgrave's right, 530
 Stout Deloraine to single fight;
 A gauntlet at their feet he laid,
 And thus the terms of fight he said:—
 'If in the lists good Musgrave's sword
 Vanquish the Knight of Deloraine, 535
 Your youthful chieftain, Branksome's Lord,
 Shall hostage for his clan remain:
 If Deloraine foil good Musgrave,
 The boy his liberty shall have.

Howe'er it falls, the English band, 540
 Unharming Scots, by Scots unharm'd,
 In peaceful march, like men unarm'd,
 Shall straight retreat to Cumberland.'

XXXIII.

Unconscious of the near relief,
 The proffer pleased each Scottish chief, 545
 Though much the Ladye sage gainsay'd ;
 For though their hearts were brave and true,
 From Jedwood's recent sack they knew,
 How tardy was the Regent's aid :
 And you may guess the noble Dame 550
 Durst not the secret prescience own,
 Sprung from the art she might not name,
 By which the coming help was known.
 Closed was the compact, and agreed
 That lists should be enclosed with speed, 555
 Beneath the castle, on a lawn :
 They fix'd the morrow for the strife,
 On foot, with Scottish axe and knife,
 At the fourth hour from peep of dawn ;
 When Deloraine, from sickness freed, 560
 Or else a champion in his stead,
 Should for himself and chieftain stand,
 Against stout Musgrave, hand to hand.

XXXIV.

I know right well, that, in their lay,
 Full many minstrels sing and say, 565
 Such combat should be made on horse,
 On foaming steed, in full career,
 With brand to aid, when as the spear
 Should shiver in the course :
 But he, the jovial harper, taught 570
 Me, yet a youth, how it was fought,
 In guise which now I say ;

He knew each ordinance and clause
Of Black Lord Archibald's battle-laws,

In the old Douglas' day.

575

He brook'd not, he, that scoffing tongue
Should tax his minstrelsy with wrong,

Or call his song untrue:

For this, when they the goblet plied,
And such rude taunt had chafed his pride,

580

The bard of Reull he slew.

On Teviot's side, in fight they stood,
And tuneful hands were stain'd with blood;
Where still the thorn's white branches wave,
Memorial o'er his rival's grave.

585

XXXV.

Why should I tell the rigid doom,
That dragg'd my master to his tomb;

How Ousenam's maidens tore their hair,
Wept till their eyes were déad and dim,
And wrung their hands for love of him,

590

Who died at Jedwood Air?

He died!—his scholars, one by one,
To the cold silent grave are gone;
And I, alas! survive alone,

To muse o'er rivalries of yore,
And grieve that I shall hear no more

595

The strains, with envy heard before;
For, with my minstrel brethren fled,
My jealousy of song is dead.

HE paused: the listening dames again
Applaud the hoary Minstrel's strain.

600

With many a word of kindly cheer,—
In pity half, and half sincere,—
Marvell'd the Duchess how so well
His legendary song could tell—

605

Of ancient deeds, so long forgot ;
Of feuds, whose memory was not ;
Of forests, now laid waste and bare ;
Of towers, which harbour now the hare ;
Of manners, long since changed and gone ;
Of chiefs, who under their grey stone
So long had slept, that fickle Fame
Had blotted from her rolls their name,
And twined round some new minion's head
The fading wreath for which they bled ;
In sooth, 'twas strange, this old man's verse
Could call them from their marble hearse.

610

615

The Harper smiled, well pleased ; for ne'er
Was flattery lost on Poet's ear :
A simple race ! they waste their toil
For the vain tribute of a smile ;
E'en when in age their flame expires,
Her dulcet breath can fan its fires :
Their drooping fancy wakes at praise,
And strives to trim the short-lived blaze.

620

625

Smiled, then, well-pleased, the Aged Man,
And thus his tale continued ran.

CANTO FIFTH.

I.

CALL it not vain:—they do not err,
 Who say, that when the Poet dies,
 Mute Nature mourns her worshipper,
 And celebrates his obsequies :

Who say, tall cliff, and cavern lone,
 For the departed Bard make moan ;
 That mountains weep in crystal rill ;
 That flowers in tears of balm distil ;
 Through his loved groves that breezes sigh,
 And oaks, in deeper groan, reply ;
 And rivers teach their rushing wave
 To murmur dirges round his grave.

5

10

II.

Not that, in sooth, o'er mortal urn
 Those things inanimate can mourn ;
 But that the stream, the wood, the gale,
 Is vocal with the plaintive wail
 Of those, who, else forgotten long,
 Lived in the poet's faithful song,
 And, with the poet's parting breath,
 Whose memory feels a second death.
 The Maid's pale shade, who wails her lot,
 That love, true love, should be forgot,
 From rose and hawthorn shakes the tear
 Upon the gentle Minstrel's bier :
 The phantom Knight, his glory fled,
 Mourns o'er the field he heap'd with dead ;
 Mounts the wild blast that sweeps amain,
 And shrieks along the battle-plain.
 The chief, whose antique crownlet long
 Still sparkled in the feudal song,
 Now, from the mountain's misty throne,
 Sees, in the thanedom once his own,

15

20

25

30

His ashes undistinguished lie,
 His place, his power, his memory die:
 His groans the lonely caverns fill, 35
 His tears of rage impel the rill;
 All mourn the Minstrel's harp unstrung,
 Their name unknown, their praise unsung.

III.

Scarcely the hot assault was staid,
 The terms of truce were scarcely made, 40
 When they could spy, from Branksome's towers,
 The advancing march of martial powers.
 Thick clouds of dust afar appear'd,
 And trampling steeds were faintly heard;
 Bright spears above the columns dun, 45
 Glanced momentary to the sun;
 And feudal banners fair display'd
 The bands that moved to Branksome's aid.

IV.

Vails not to tell each hardy clan,
 From the fair Middle Marches came; 50
 The Bloody Heart blazed in the van,
 Announcing Douglas, dreaded name!
 Vails not to tell what steeds did spurn,
 Where the Seven Spears of Wedderburne
 Their men in battle-order set; 55
 And Swinton laid the lance in rest,
 That tamed of yore the sparkling crest
 Of Clarence's Plantagenet.
 Nor list I say what hundreds more,
 From the rich Merse and Lammermore, 60
 And Tweed's fair borders to the war,
 Beneath the crest of Old Dunbar,
 And Hepburn's mingled banners come,
 Deep the steep mountain glittering far,
 And shouting still, 'A Home! a Home!' 65

V.

Now squire and knight, from Branksome sent,
 On many a courteous message went;
 To every chief and lord they paid
 Meet thanks for prompt and powerful aid;
 And told them,—how a truce was made, 70
 And how a day of fight was ta'en
 'Twixt Musgrave and stout Deloraine,
 And how the Ladye pray'd them dear,
 That all would stay the fight to see,
 And deign, in love and courtesy, 75
 To taste of Branksome cheer.
 Nor, while they bade to feast each Scot,
 Were England's noble Lords forgot.
 Himself, the hoary Seneschal
 Rode forth, in seemly terms to call 80
 Those gallant foes to Branksome Hall.
 Accepted Howard, than whom knight
 Was never dubb'd, more bold in fight;
 Nor, when from war and armour free,
 More famed for stately courtesy: 85
 But angry Dacre rather chose
 In his pavilion to repose.

VI.

Now, noble Dame, perchance you ask,
 How these two hostile armies met?
 Deeming it were no easy task 90
 To keep the truce which here was set;
 Where martial spirits, all on fire,
 Breathed only blood and mortal ire.—
 By mutual inroads, mutual blows,
 By habit, and by nation, foes, 95
 They met on Teviot's strand;
 They met and sate them mingled down,
 Without a threat, without a frown,
 As brothers meet in foreign land:
 The hands, the spear that lately grasp'd, 100

Still in the mailed gauntlet clasp'd,
 Were interchanged in greeting dear;
 Visors were raised, and faces shown,
 And many a friend, to friend made known,
 Partook of social cheer. 105
 Some drove the jolly bowl about;
 With dice and draughts some chased the day;
 And some, with many a merry shout,
 In riot, revelry, and rout,
 Pursued the foot-ball play. 110

VII.

Yet, be it known, had bugles blown,
 Or sign of war been seen,
 Those bands, so fair together ranged,
 Those hands, so frankly interchanged,
 Had dyed with gore the green: 115
 The merry shout by Teviot-side
 Had sunk in war-cries wild and wide,
 And in the groan of death;
 And whingers, now in friendship bare,
 The social meal to part and share, 120
 Had found a bloody sheath.
 'Twixt truce and war, such sudden change
 Was not infrequent, nor held strange,
 In the old Border-day:
 But yet on Branksome's towers and town, 125
 In peaceful merriment, sunk down
 The sun's declining ray.

VIII.

The blithsome signs of wassel gay
 Decay'd not with the dying day:
 Soon through the latticed windows tall 130
 Of lofty Branksome's lordly hall,
 Divided square by shafts of stone,
 Huge flakes of ruddy lustre shone;
 Nor less the gilded rafters rang
 With merry harp and beakers' clang: 135

And frequent, on the darkening plain,
 Loud hollo, whoop, or whistle ran,
 As bands, their stragglers to regain,
 Give the shrill watchword of their clan;
 And revellers, o'er their bowls, proclaim
 Douglas' or Dacre's conquering name.

140

IX.

Less frequent heard, and fainter still,
 At length the various clamours died:
 And you might hear, from Branksome hill,
 No sound but Teviot's rushing tide;
 Save when the changing sentinel
 The challenge of his watch could tell;
 And save, where, through the dark profound
 The clanging axe and hammer's sound
 Rung from the nether lawn;
 For many a busy hand toil'd there,
 Strong pales to shape, and beams to square,
 The lists' dread barriers to prepare
 Against the morrow's dawn.

145

150

X.

Margaret from hall did soon retreat,
 Despite the Dame's reproving eye;
 Nor mark'd she, as she left her seat,
 Full many a stifled sigh;
 For many a noble warrior strove
 To win the Flower of Teviot's love,
 And many a bold ally.—
 With throbbing head and anxious heart,
 All in her lonely bower apart,
 In broken sleep she lay:
 Betimes from silken couch she rose;
 While yet the banner'd hosts repose,
 She view'd the dawning day:
 Of all the hundreds sunk to rest,
 First woke the loveliest and the best.

155

160

165

XI.

She gazed upon the inner court, 170
 Which in the tower's tall shadow lay;
 Where coursers' clang, and stamp, and snort,
 Had rung the livelong yesterday;
 Now still as death; till stalking slow,—
 The jingling spurs announced his tread, 175
 A stately warrior pass'd below;
 But when he raised his plumed head—
 Blessed Mary! can it be?—
 Secure, as if in Ousenam bowers,
 He walks through Branksome's hostile towers, 180
 With fearless step and free.
 She dared not sign, she dared not speak—
 Oh! if one page's slumbers break,
 His blood the price must pay!
 Not all the pearls Queen Mary wears, 185
 Not Margaret's yet more precious tears,
 Shall buy his life a day.

XII.

Yet was his hazard small; for well
 You may bethink you of the spell
 Of that sly urchin page; 190
 This to his lord he did impart,
 And made him seem, by glamour art,
 A knight from Hermitage.
 Unchallenged thus, the warder's post,
 The court, unchallenged, thus he cross'd, 195
 For all the vassalage:
 But O! what magic's quaint disguise
 Could blind fair Margaret's azure eyes!
 She started from her seat;
 While with surprise and fear she strove, 200
 And both could scarcely master love—
 Lord Henry's at her feet.

XIII.

Oft have I mused, what purpose bad
 That foul malicious urchin had
 To bring this meeting round ; 205
 For happy love's a heavenly sight,
 And by a vile malignant sprite
 In such no joy is found ;
 And oft I've deem'd, perchance he thought
 Their erring passion might have wrought 210
 Sorrow, and sin, and shame ;
 And death to Cranstoun's gallant Knight,
 And to the gentle ladye bright,
 Disgrace, and loss of fame.
 But earthly spirit could not tell 215
 The heart of them that loved so well.
 True love's the gift which God has given
 To man alone beneath the heaven :
 It is not fantasy's hot fire,
 Whose wishes, soon as granted, fly ; 220
 It liveth not in fierce desire,
 With dead desire it doth not die ;
 It is the secret sympathy,
 The silver link, the silken tie,
 Which heart to heart, and mind to mind, 225
 In body and in soul can bind.—
 Now leave we Margaret and her Knight,
 To tell you of the approaching fight.

XIV.

Their warning blasts the bugles blew,
 The pipe's shrill port aroused each clan : 230
 In haste, the deadly strife to view,
 The trooping warriors eager ran :
 Thick round the lists their lances stood,
 Like blasted pines in Ettrick wood ;
 To Branksome many a look they threw, 235
 The combatant's approach to view,
 And bandied many a word of boast,
 About the knight each favour'd most.

XV.

Meantime full anxious was the Dame;
For now arose disputed claim, 240
Of who should fight for Deloraine,
'Twixt Harden and 'twixt Thirlestaine:
They 'gan to reckon kin and rent,
And frowning brow on brow was bent;
But yet not long the strife—for, lo! 245
Himself, the knight of Deloraine,
Strong, as it seem'd, and free from pain,
In' armour sheath'd from top to toe,
Appear'd, and craved the combat due.
The Dame her charm successful knew, 250
And the fierce chiefs their claims withdrew.

XVI.

When for the lists they sought the plain,
The stately Ladye's silken rein
Did noble Howard hold;
Unarmed by her side he walk'd, 255
And much, in courteous phrase, they talk'd
Of feats of arms of old.
Costly his garb—his Flemish ruff
Fell o'er his doublet, shaped of buff,
With satin slash'd and lined; 260
Tawny his boot, and gold his spur,
His cloak was all of Poland fur,
His hose with silver twined;
His Bilboa blade, by Marchmen felt,
Hung in a broad and studded belt; 265
Hence, in rude phrase, the Borderers still
Call'd noble Howard, Belted Will.

XVII.

Behind Lord Howard and the Dame,
 Fair Margaret on her palfrey came,
 Whose foot-cloth swept the ground : 270
 White was her wimple, and her veil,
 And her loose locks a chaplet pale
 Of whitest roses bound ;
 The lordly Angus, by her side,
 In courtesy to cheer her tried ; 275
 Without his aid, her hand in vain
 Had strove to guide her broider'd rein.
 He deem'd, she shudder'd at the sight
 Of warriors met for mortal fight ;
 But cause of terror, all unguess'd, 280
 Was fluttering in her gentle breast,
 When, in their chairs of crimson placed,
 The Dame and she the barriers graced.

XVIII.

Prize of the field, the young Buccleuch,
 An English knight led forth to view ; 285
 Scarce rued the boy his present plight,
 So much he long'd to see the fight.
 Within the lists, in knightly pride,
 High Home and haughty Dacre ride ;
 Their leading staffs of steel they wield, 290
 As marshals of the mortal field ;
 While to each knight their care assign'd
 Like vantage of the sun and wind.
 Then heralds hoarse did loud proclaim,
 In King and Queen, and Warden's name, 295
 That none, while lasts the strife,
 Should dare, by look, or sign, or word,
 Aid to a champion to afford,
 On peril of his life ;
 And not a breath the silence broke, 300
 Till thus the alternate Herald spoke :—

XIX.

ENGLISH HERALD.

'Here standeth Richard of Musgrave,
 Good knight and true, and freely born,
 Amends from Deloraine to crave,
 For foul despicable scathe and scorn. 305
 He sayeth, that William of Deloraine
 Is traitor false by Border laws;
 This with his sword he will maintain,
 So help him God, and his good cause!'

XX.

SCOTTISH HERALD.

'Here standeth William of Deloraine, 310
 Good knight and true, of noble strain,
 Who sayeth, that foul treason's stain,
 Since he bore arms, ne'er soil'd his coat;
 And that, so help him God above!
 He will on Musgrave's body prove, 315
 He lies most foully in his throat.'

LORD DACRE.

'Forward, brave champions, to the fight!
 Sound trumpets!'—

LORD HOME.

—'God defend the right!'—

Then Teviot! how thine echoes rang,
 When bugle-sound and trumpet-clang 320
 Let loose the martial foes,
 And in mid list, with shield poised high,
 And measured step and wary eye,
 The combatants did close.

XXI.

Ill would it suit your gentle ear, 325
 Ye lovely listeners, to hear
 How to the axe the helms did sound,
 And blood pour'd down from many a wound;

For desperate was the strife, and long,
 And either warrior fierce and strong. 330
 But, were each dame a listening knight,
 I well could tell how warriors fight!
 For I have seen war's lightning flashing,
 Seen the claymore with bayonet clashing,
 Seen through red blood the war-horse dashing, 335
 And scorn'd, amid the reeling strife,
 To yield a step for death or life.—

XXII.

'Tis done, 'tis done! that fatal blow
 Has stretch'd him on the bloody plain;
 He strives to rise—Brave Musgrave, no! 340
 Thence never shalt thou rise again!
 He chokes in blood—some friendly hand
 Undo the visor's barred band,
 Unfix the gorget's iron clasp,
 And give him room for life to gasp! 345
 O, bootless aid!—haste, holy Friar,
 Haste, ere the sinner shall expire!
 Of all his guilt let him be shriven,
 And smooth his path from earth to heaven!

XXIII.

In haste the holy Friar sped;— 350
 His naked foot was dyed with red,
 As through the lists he ran;
 Unmindful of the shouts on high,
 That hail'd the conqueror's victory,
 He raised the dying man; 355
 Loose waved his silver beard and hair,
 As o'er him he kneel'd down in prayer;
 And still the crucifix on high
 He holds before his darkening eye;
 And still he bends an anxious ear, 360
 His faltering penitence to hear;
 Still props him from the bloody sod,

Still, even when soul and body part,
 Pours ghostly comfort on his heart,
 And bids him trust in God!
 Unheard he prays;—the death-pang's o'er!
 Richard of Musgrave breathes no more.

365

XXIV.

As if exhausted in the fight,
 Or musing o'er the piteous sight,
 The silent victor stands;
 His beaver did he not unclasp,
 Mark'd not the shouts, felt not the grasp
 Of gratulating hands.

370

When lo! strange cries of wild surprise,
 Mingled with seeming terror, rise

375

Among the Scottish bands;
 And all, amid the throng'd array,
 In panic haste gave open way
 To a half-naked ghastly man,
 Who downward from the castle ran:
 He cross'd the barriers at a bound,
 And wild and haggard look'd around,

380

As dizzy, and in pain;
 And all, upon the armed ground,

Knew William of Deloraine!
 Each ladye sprung from seat with speed;
 Vaulted each marshal from his steed;

385

'And who art thou,' they cried,
 'Who hast this battle fought and won?'—
 His plumed helm was soon undone—

390

'Cranstoun of Teviot-side!
 For this fair prize I've fought and won,'—
 And to the Ladye led her son.

XXV.

Full oft the rescued boy she kiss'd,
 And often press'd him to her breast;
 For, under all her dauntless show,
 Her heart had throb'd at every blow;

395

Yet not Lord Cranstoun deign'd she greet,
 Though low he kneeled at her feet.
 Me lists not tell what words were made, 400
 What Douglas, Home, and Howard, said—
 —For Howard was a generous foe—
 And how the clan united pray'd
 The Ladye would the feud forego,
 And deign to bless the nuptial hour 405
 Of Cranstoun's Lord and Teviot's Flower.

XXVI.

She look'd to river, look'd to hill,
 Thought on the Spirit's prophecy,
 Then broke her silence stern and still,—
 "Not you, but Fate, has vanquish'd me; 410
 Their influence kindly stars may shower
 On Teviot's tide and Branksome's tower,
 For pride is quell'd, and love is free."—
 She took fair Margaret by the hand,
 Who, breathless, trembling, scarce might stand; 415
 That hand to Cranstoun's lord gave she:—
 "As I am true to thee and thine,
 Do thou be true to me and mine!
 This clasp of love our bond shall be;
 For this is your betrothing day, 420
 And all these noble lords shall stay,
 To grace it with their company."—

XXVII.

All as they left the listed plain,
 Much of the story she did gain;
 How Cranstoun fought with Deloraine, 425
 And of his page, and of the Book
 Which from the wounded knight he took;
 And how he sought her castle high,
 That morn, by help, of gramarye;
 How, in Sir William's armour dight, 430
 Stolen by his page, while slept the knight,
 He took on him the single fight.

But half his tale he left unsaid,
 And linger'd till he join'd the maid.—
 Cared not the Ladye to betray 435
 Her mystic arts in view of day;
 But well she thought, ere midnight came,
 Of that strange page the pride to tame,
 From his foul hands the Book to save,
 And send it back to Michael's grave.— 440
 Needs not to tell each tender word
 'Twixt Margaret and 'twixt Cranstoun's lord;
 Nor how she told the former woes,
 And how her bosom fell and rose,
 While he and Musgrave bandied blows.— 445
 Needs not these lovers' joys to tell:
 One day, fair maids, you'll know them well.

XXVIII.

William of Deloraine, some chance
 Had waken'd from his deathlike trance;
 And taught that, in the listed plain, 450
 Another, in his arms and shield,
 Against fierce Musgrave axe did wield,
 Under the name of Deloraine.
 Hence, to the field, unarm'd, he ran,
 And hence his presence scared the clan, 455
 Who held him for some fleeting wraith,
 And not a man of blood and breath.
 Not much this new ally he loved,
 Yet, when he saw what hap had proved,
 He greeted him right heartilie : 460
 He would not waken old debate,
 For he was void of rancorous hate,
 Though rude, and scant of courtesy;
 In raids he spilt but seldom blood
 Unless when men-at-arms withstood, 465
 Or, as was meet, for deadly feud.
 He ne'er bore grudge for stalwart blow,
 Ta'en in fair fight from gallant foe :

And so 'twas seen of him, e'en now,
 When on dead Musgrave he look'd down; 470
 Grief darkened on his rugged brow,
 Though half disguised with a frown;
 And thus, while sorrow bent his head,
 His foeman's epitaph he made:—

XXIX.

"Now, Richard Musgrave, liest thou here! 475
 I ween, my deadly enemy;
 For, if I slew thy brother dear,
 Thou slew'st a sister's son to me;
 And when I lay in dungeon dark,
 Of Naworth Castle, long months three, 480
 Till ransom'd for a thousand mark,
 Dark Musgrave, it was long of thee.
 And, Musgrave, could our fight be tried,
 And thou wert now alive, as I,
 No mortal man should us divide, 485
 Till one, or both of us, did die:
 Yet rest thee God! for well I know
 I ne'er shall find a nobler foe.
 In all the northern counties here,
 Whose word is Snaffle, spur, and spear, 490
 Thou wert the best to follow gear!
 'Twas pleasure, as we look'd behind,
 To see how thou the chase could'st wind,
 Cheer the dark blood-hound on his way,
 And with the bugle rouse the fray! 495
 I'd give the lands of Deloraine,
 Dark Musgrave were alive again."

XXX.

So mourn'd he, till Lord Dacre's band
 Were bowning back to Cumberland.
 They raised brave Musgrave from the field, 500
 And laid him on his bloody shield;
 On levell'd lances, four and four,
 By turns, the noble burden bore.

Before, at times, upon the gale,
Was heard the Minstrel's plaintive wail; 505
Behind, four priests, in sable stole,
Sung requiem for the warrior's soul:
Around, the horsemen slowly rode;
With trailing pikes the spearmen trode;
And thus the gallant knight they bore, 510
Through Liddesdale to Leven's shore;
Thence to Holme Coltrame's lofty nave,
And laid him in his father's grave.

THE harp's wild notes, though hush'd the song,
The mimic march of death prolong; 515
Now seems it far, and now a-near.
Now meets, and now eludes the ear;
Now seems some mountain side to sweep,
Now faintly dies in valley deep;
Seems now as if the Minstrel's wail, 520
Now the sad requiem, loads the gale;
Last, o'er the warrior's closing grave,
Rung the full choir in choral stave.

After due pause, they bade him tell,
Why he, who touch'd the harp so well, 525
Should thus, with ill-rewarded toil,
Wander a poor and thankless soil,
When the more generous Southern Land
Would well requite his skilful hand.

The Aged Harper, howsoe'er 530
His only friend, his harp, was dear,
Liked not to hear it rank'd so high
Above his flowing poesy:
Less liked he still, that scornful jeer
Misprised the land he loved so dear; 535
High was the sound, as thus again.
The Bard resumed his minstrel strain.

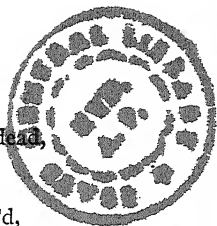
CANTO SIXTH.

I.

BREATHES there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,

This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd,

From wandering on a foreign strand!
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
For him no Minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung.



5

10

15

II.

O Caledonia! stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child!
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of my sires! what mortal hand
Can e'er untie the filial band,
That knits me to thy rugged strand!
Still, as I view each well-known scene,
Think what is now, and what hath been,
Seems as, to me, of all bereft,
Sole friends thy woods and streams were left;
And thus I love them better still,
Even in extremity of ill.
By Yarrow's stream still let me stray,
Though none should guide my feeble way;

20

25

30

Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break,
 Although it chill my wither'd cheek ;
 Still lay my head by Teviot Stone,
 Though there, forgotten and alone, 35
 The Bard may draw his parting groan.

III.

Not scorn'd like me ! to Branksome Hall
 The Minstrels came, at festive call ;
 Trooping they came, from near and far.
 The jovial priests of mirth and war ; 40
 Alike for feast and fight prepared,
 Battle and banquet both they shared.
 Of late, before each martial clan,
 They blew their death-note in the van,
 But now, for every merry mate, 45
 Rose the portcullis' iron grate ;
 They sound the pipe, they strike the string,
 They dance, they revel, and they sing,
 Till the rude turrets shake and ring.

IV.

Me lists not at this tide declare 50
 The splendour of the spousal rite,
 How muster'd in the chapel fair
 Both maid and matron, squire and knight ;
 Me lists not tell of owches rare,
 Of mantels green, and braided hair, 55
 And kirtles furr'd with miniver ;
 What plumage waved the altar round,
 How spurs and ringing chainlets sound ;
 And hard it were for bard to speak
 The changeful hue of Margaret's cheek ; 60
 That lovely hue which comes and flies,
 As awe and shame alternate rise !

V.

Some bards have sung, the Ladye high
 Chapel or altar came not nigh ;

Nor durst the rites of spousal grace,
 So much she fear'd each holy place.
 False slanders these:—I trust right well
 She wrought not by forbidden spell;
 For mighty words and signs have power
 O'er sprites in planetary hour:
 Yet scarce I praise their venturous part,
 Who tamper with such dangerous art.
 But this for faithful truth I say,
 The Ladye by the altar stood,
 Of sable velvet her array,
 And on her head a crimson hood,
 With pearls embroider'd and entwined,
 Guarded with gold, with ermine lined;
 A merlin sat upon her wrist,
 Held by a leash of silken twist.

VI.

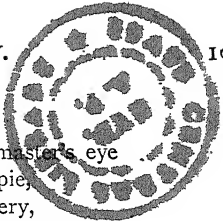
The spousal rites were ended soon:
 'Twas now the merry hour of noon,
 And in the lofty arched hall
 Was spread the gorgeous festival.
 Steward and squire, with heedful haste,
 Marshall'd the rank of every guest;
 Pages, with ready blade, were there,
 The mighty meal to carve and share:
 O'er capon, heron-shew, and crane,
 And princely peacock's gilded train,
 And o'er the boar-head, garnish'd brave,
 And cygnet from St. Mary's wave;
 O'er ptarmigan and venison,
 The priest had spoke his benison.
 Then rose the riot and the din,
 Above, beneath, without, within!
 For, from the lofty balcony,
 Rung trumpet, shalm, and psaltery:
 Their clanging bowls old warriors quaff'd,
 Loudly they spoke, and loudly laugh'd;

Whisper'd young knights, in tone more mild,
 To ladies fair, and ladies smiled.
 The hooded hawks, high perch'd on beam,
 The clamour join'd with whistling scream,
 And flapp'd their wings, and shook their bells, 105
 In concert with the stag-hounds' yells.
 Round go the flasks of ruddy wine,
 From Bourdeaux, Orleans, or the Rhine ;
 Their tasks the busy sewers ply,
 And all is mirth and revelry. 110

VII.

The Goblin Page, omitting still
 No opportunity of ill,
 Strove now, while blood ran hot and high,
 To rouse debate and jealousy;
 Till Conrad, Lord of Wolfenstein, 115
 By nature fierce, and warm with wine,
 And now in humour highly cross'd,
 About some steeds his band had lost,
 High words to words succeeding still,
 Smote, with his gauntlet, stout Hunthill ; 120
 A hot and hardy Rutherford,
 Whom men called Dickon Draw-the-sword.
 He took it on the page's saye,
 Hunthill had driven these steeds away.
 Then Howard, Home, and Douglas rose, 125
 The kindling discord to compose :
 Stern Rutherford right little said,
 But bit his glove, and shook his head.—
 A fortnight thence, in Inglewood,
 Stout Conrad, cold, and drench'd in blood, 130
 His bosom gored with many a wound,
 Was by a woodman's lyme-dog found ;
 Unknown the manner of his death,
 Gone was his brand, both sword and sheath ;
 But ever from that time, 'twas said, 135
 That Dickon wore a Cologne blade.

VIII.



The dwarf, who fear'd his master's eye
Might his foul treachery espie,
Now sought the castle buttery,
Where many a yoeman, bold and free,
Revell'd as merrily and well 140
As those that sat in lordly selle.
Watt Tinlinn, there, did frankly raise
The pledge to Arthur Fire-the-Braes;
And he, as by his breeding bound, 145
To Howard's merry-men sent it round.
To quit them, on the English side,
Red Roland Forster loudly cried,
"A deep carouse to yon fair bride!"—
At every pledge, from vat and pail, 150
Foam'd forth in floods the nut-brown ale:
While shout the riders every one:
Such day of mirth ne'er cheer'd their clan,
Since old Buccleuch the name did gain,
When in the cleuch the buck was ta'en. 155

IX.

GR 10286

The wily page, with vengeful thought,
Remember'd him of Tinlinn's yew,
And swore, it should be dearly bought
That ever he the arrow drew.
First, he the yeoman did molest, 160
With bitter gibe and taunting jest;
Told, how he fled at Solway strife,
And how Hob Armstrong cheer'd his wife;
Then, shunning still his powerful arm,
At unawares he wrought him harm; 165
From trencher stole his choicest cheer,
Dash'd from his lips his can of beer;
Then, to his knee sly creeping on,
With bodkin pierced him to the bone:
The venom'd wound, and festering joint, 170
Long after rued that bodkin's point.

The startled yeoman swore and spurn'd,
 And board and flagons overturn'd.
 Riot and clamour wild began;
 Back to the hall the Urchin ran; 175
 Took in a darkling nook his post,
 And grinn'd, and mutter'd, "Lost! lost! lost!"

X.

By this, the Dame, lest farther fray
 Should mar the concord of the day,
 Had bid the Minstrels tune their lay. 180
 And first stept forth old Albert Græme,
 The Minstrel of that ancient name:
 Was none who struck the harp so well,
 Within the Land Debateable;
 Well friended, too, his hardy kin, 185
 Whoever lost, were sure to win;
 They sought the beeves that made their broth,
 In Scotland and in England both.
 In homely guise, as nature bade,
 His simple song the Borderer said. 190

XI.

ALBERT GRÆME.

It was an English ladye bright,
 (The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
 And she would marry a Scottish knight,
 For Love will still be lord of all.
 Blithely they saw the rising sun, 195
 When he shone fair on Carlisle wall;
 But they were sad ere day was done,
 Though Love was still the lord of all.
 Her sire gave brooch and jewel fine,
 Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall; 200
 Her brother gave but a flask of wine,
 For ire that Love was lord of all.

For she had lands, both meadow and lea,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,
And he swore her death, ere he would see 205
A Scottish knight the lord of all.

XII.

That wine she had not tasted well,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,
When dead, in her true love's arms, she fell,
For Love was still the lord of all! 210

He pierced her brother to the heart,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall :—
So perish all would true love part,
That Love may still be lord of all!

And then he took the cross divine, 215
(Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,
And died for her sake in Palestine;
So Love was still the lord of all.

Now all ye lovers, that faithful prove,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,) 220
Pray for their souls who died for love,
For Love shall still be lord of all!

XIII.

As ended Albert's simple lay,
Arose a bard of loftier port;
For sonnet, rhyme, and roundelay, 225
Renown'd in haughty Henry's court:
There rung thy harp, unrivall'd long,
Fitztraver of the silver song!
The gentle Surrey loved his lyre—
Who has not heard of Surrey's fame? 230
His was the hero's soul of fire,
And his the bard's immortal name,
And his was love, exalted high
By all the glow of chivalry.

XIV.

They sought, together, climes afar, 235
 And oft, within some olive grove,
 When even came with twinkling star,
 They sung of Surrey's absent love.
 His step the Italian peasant stay'd,
 And deem'd, that spirits from on high, 240
 Round where some hermit saint was laid,
 Were breathing heavenly melody;
 So sweet did harp and voice combine,
 To praise the name of Geraldine.

XV.

Fitztraver! O what tongue may say 245
 The pangs thy faithful bosom knew,
 When Surrey, of the deathless lay,
 Ungrateful Tudor's sentence slew?
 Regardless of the tyrant's frown,
 His harp call'd wrath and vengeance down. 250
 He left, for Naworth's iron towers,
 Windsor's green glades, and courtly bowers,
 And, faithful to his patron's name,
 With Howard still Fitztraver came;
 Lord William's foremost favourite he, 255
 And chief of all his minstrelsy.

XVI.

FITZTRAVER.

'Twas All-Souls' eve, and Surrey's heart beat high;
 He heard the midnight bell with anxious start,
 Which told the mystic hour, approaching nigh,
 When wise Cornelius promised, by his art, 260
 To show to him the ladye of his heart,
 Albeit betwixt them roar'd the ocean grim;
 Yet so the sage had hight to play his part,
 That he should see her form in life and limb,
 And mark, if still she loved, and still she thought of
 him. 265

XVII.

Dark was the vaulted room of gramarye,
 To which the wizard led the gallant Knight,
 Save that before a mirror, huge and high,
 A hallow'd taper shed a glimmering light
 On mystic implements of magic might ; 270
 On cross, and character, and talisman,
 And almagest, and altar, nothing bright :
 For fitful was the lustre, pale and wan,
 As watchlight by the bed of some departing man.

XVIII.

But soon, within that mirror huge and high, 275
 Was seen a self-emitted light to gleam ;
 And forms upon its breast the Earl 'gan spy,
 Cloudy and indistinct, as feverish dream ;
 Till, slow arranging, and defined, they seem
 To form a lordly and a lofty room, 280
 Part lighted by a lamp with silver beam,
 Placed by a couch of Agra's silken loom,
 And part by moonshine pale, and part was hid in gloom.

XIX.

Fair all the pageant—but how passing fair
 The slender form, which lay on couch of Ind ! 285
 O'er her white bosom stray'd her hazel hair,
 Pale her dear cheek, as if for love she pined ;
 All in her night-robe loose she lay reclined,
 And, pensive, read from tablet eburnine,
 Some strain that seem'd her inmost soul to find :— 290
 That favour'd strain was Surrey's raptured line,
 That fair and lovely form, the Lady Geraldine.

XX.

Slow roll'd the clouds upon the lovely form,
 And swept the goodly vision all away—
 So royal envy roll'd the murky storm 295
 O'er my beloved Master's glorious day.

Thou jealous, ruthless tyrant! Heaven repay
 On thee, and on thy children's latest line,
 The wild caprice of thy despotic sway,
 The gory bridal bed, the plunder'd shrine, 300
 The murder'd Surrey's blood, the tears of Geraldine!

XXI.

Both Scots, and Southern chiefs, prolong
 Applauses of Fitztraver's song ;
 These hated Henry's name as death,
 And those still held the ancient faith. 305
 Then, from his seat, with lofty air,
 Rose Harold, bard of brave St. Clair;
 St. Clair, who, feasting high at Home,
 Had with that lord to battle come.
 Harold was born where restless seas 310
 Howl round the storm-swept Orcades ;
 Where erst St. Clairs held princely sway
 O'er isle and islet, strait and bay ;—
 Still nods their palace to its fall,
 Thy pride and sorrow, fair Kirkwall !— 315
 Thence oft he mark'd fierce Pentland rave,
 As if grim Odin rode her wave ;
 And watch'd, the whilst, with visage pale,
 And throbbing heart, the struggling sail ;
 For all of wonderful and wild 320
 Had rapture for the lonely child.

XXII.

And much of wild and wonderful
 In these rude isles might fancy cull ;
 For thither came, in times afar,
 Stern Lochlin's sons of roving war, 325
 The Norsemen, train'd to spoil and blood,
 Skill'd to prepare the raven's food ;
 Kings of the main their leaders brave,
 Their barks the dragons of the wave.

And there, in many a stormy vale, 330
 The Scald had told his wondrous tale;
 And many a Runic column high
 Had witness'd grim idolatry.
 And thus had Harold, in his youth,
 Learn'd many a Saga's rhyme uncouth,— 335
 Of that Sea-Snake, tremendous curl'd,
 Whose monstrous circle girds the world;
 Of those dread Maids, whose hideous yell
 Maddens the battle's bloody swell;
 Of chiefs, who, guided through the gloom 340
 By the pale death-lights of the tomb,
 Ransack'd the graves of warriors old,
 Their falchions wrench'd from corpses' hold,
 Waked the deaf tomb with war's alarms,
 And bade the dead arise to arms! 345
 With war and wonder all on flame,
 To Roslin's bowers young Harold came,
 Where, by sweet glen and greenwood tree,
 He learn'd a milder minstrelsy;
 Yet something of the Northern spell 350
 Mix'd with the softer numbers well.

XXIII.

HAROLD.

O listen, listen, ladies gay!
 No haughty feat of arms I tell;
 Soft is the note, and sad the lay,
 That mourns the lovely Rosabelle. 355
 —“Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew!
 And, gentle ladye, deign to stay!
 Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
 Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.
 “The blackening wave is edged with white:—
 To inch and rock the sea-mews fly; 361
 The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,
 Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh.

- "Last night the gifted Seer did view
A wet shroud swathed round ladye gay; 365
Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch :
Why cross the gloomy firth to-day?"--
- "'Tis not because Lord Lindesay's heir
To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
But that my ladye-mother there 370
Sits lonely in her castle-hall.
- "'Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
But that my sire the wine will chide,
If 'tis not fill'd by Rosabelle."— 375
- O'er Roslin all that dreary night,
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam ;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
And redder than the bright moon-beam.
- It glared on Roslin's castled rock, 380
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen ;
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden.
- Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie, 385
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.
- Seem'd all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale ;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound, 390
And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.
- Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high St. Clair. 395
- There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
Lie buried within that proud chapelle ;
Each one the holy vault doth hold—
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle!

And each St. Clair was buried there, 400
 With candle, with book, and with knell;
 But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung,
 The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

XXIV.

So sweet was Harold's piteous lay,
 Scarce mark'd the guests the darken'd hall, 405
 Though, long before the sinking day,
 A wondrous shade involved them all:
 It was not eddying mist or fog,
 Drain'd by the sun from fen or bog;
 Of no eclipse had sages told; 410
 And yet, as it came on apace,
 Each one could scarce his neighbour's face,
 Could scarce his own stretch'd hand behold.
 A secret horror check'd the feast,
 And chill'd the soul of every guest; 415
 Even the high Dame stood half aghast,
 She knew some evil on the blast;
 The elvish page fell to the ground,
 And, shuddering, mutter'd, 'Found! found! found!'

XXV.

Then sudden, through the darken'd air 420
 A flash of lightning came;
 So broad, so bright, so red the glare,
 The castle seem'd on flame.
 Glanced every rafter of the hall,
 Glanced every shield upon the wall; 425
 Each trophied beam, each sculptured stone,
 Were instant seen, and instant gone;
 Full through the guests' bedazzled band
 Resistless flash'd the levin-brand,
 And fill'd the hall with smouldering smoke, 430
 As on the elvish page it broke.
 It broke, with thunder long and loud,
 Dismay'd the brave, appall'd the proud,—

From sea to sea the larum rung;
 On Berwick wall, and at Carlisle withal, 435
 To arms the startled warders sprung.
 When ended was the dreadful roar,
 The elvish dwarf was seen no more!

XXVI.

Some heard a voice in Branksome Hall,
 Some saw a sight not seen by all; 440
 That dreadful voice was heard by some,
 Cry, with loud summons, 'GYLBIN, COME !'
 And on the spot where burst the brand,
 Just where the page had flung him down,
 Some saw an arm, and some a hand, 445
 And some the waving of a gown.
 The guests in silence prayed and shook,
 And terror dimm'd each lofty look.
 But none of all the astonished train
 Was so dismay'd as Deloraine : 450
 His blood did freeze, his brain did burn,
 'Twas fear'd his mind would ne'er return;
 For he was speechless, ghastly, wan,
 Like him of whom the story ran,
 Who spoke the spectre-hound in Man. 455
 At length, by fits, he darkly told,
 With broken hint, and shuddering cold—
 That he had seen, right certainly,
A shape with amice wrapp'd around,
With a wrought Spanish baldric bound, 460
Like pilgrim from beyond the sea;
 And knew—but how it matter'd not—
 It was the wizard, Michael Scott.

XXVII.

The anxious crowd, with horror pale,
 All trembling heard the wondrous tale : 465
 No sound was made, no word was spoke,
 Till noble Angus silence broke;

And he a solemn sacred plight
 Did to St. Bride of Douglas make,
 That he a pilgrimage would take 470
 To Melrose Abbey, for the sake
 Of Michael's restless sprite.
 Then each, to ease his troubled breast,
 To some bless'd saint his prayers address'd:
 Some to St. Modan made their vows, 475
 Some to St. Mary of the Lowes,
 Some to the Holy Rood of Lisle,
 Some to our Ladye of the Isle;
 Each did his patron witness make,
 That he such pilgrimage would take, 480
 And monks should sing, and bells should toll,
 All for the weal of Michael's soul.
 While vows where ta'en, and prayers were pray'd,
 'Tis said the noble dame, dismay'd,
 Renounced, for aye, dark magic's aid. 485

XXVIII.

Nought of the bridal will I tell,
 Which after in short space befell;
 Nor how brave sons and daughters fair
 Bless'd Teviot's Flower, and Cranstoun's heir:
 After such dreadful scene, 'twere vain 490
 To wake the note of mirth again.
 More meet it were to mark the day
 Of penitence, and prayer divine,
 When pilgrim chiefs, in sad array,
 Sought Melrose' holy shrine. 495

XXIX.

With naked foot, and sackcloth vest,
 And arms enfolded on his breast,
 Did every pilgrim go;
 The standers-by might hear uneath,
 Footstep, or voice, or high-drawn breath, 500
 Through all the lengthen'd row:

No lordly look, nor martial stride;
 Gone was their glory, sunk their pride,
 Forgotten their renown;
 Silent and slow, like ghosts they glide 505
 To the high altar's hallow'd side,
 And there they knelt them down:
 Above the suppliant chieftains wave
 The banners of departed brave;
 Beneath the letter'd stones were laid 510
 The ashes of their fathers dead;
 From many a garnish'd niche around,
 Stern saints and tortured martyrs frown'd.

XXX.

And slow up the dim aisle afar,
 With sable cowl and scapular, 515
 And snow-white stoles, in order due,
 The holy Fathers, two and two,
 In long procession came;
 Taper and host, and book they bare,
 And holy banner, flourish'd fair 520
 With the Redeemer's name.
 Above the prostrate pilgrim band
 The mitred Abbot stretch'd his hand,
 And bless'd them as they kneel'd;
 With holy cross he signed them all, 525
 And pray'd they might be sage in hall,
 And fortunate in field.
 Then mass was sung, and prayers were said,
 And solemn requiem for the dead;
 And bells toll'd out their mighty peal, 530
 For the departed spirit's weal;
 And ever in the office close
 The hymn of intercession rose;
 And far the echoing aisles prolong
 The awful burthen of the song,— 535
 DIES IRÆ, DIES ILLA,
 SOLVET SÆCLUM IN FAVILLA;

While the pealing organ rung.
Were it meet with sacred strain
To close my lay, so light and vain,
Thus the holy Fathers sung :—

540

XXXI.

HYMN FOR THE DEAD.

That day of wrath; that dreadful day,
When heaven and earth shall pass away!
What power shall be the sinner's stay?
How shall he meet that dreadful day?

545

When, shriveling like a parched scroll,
The flaming heavens together roll;
When louder yet, and yet more dread,
Swells the high trump that wakes the dead!

Oh! on that day, that wrathful day,
When man to judgment wakes from clay,
Be THOU the trembling sinner's stay,
Though heaven and earth shall pass away!

550

HUSH'D is the harp—the Minstrel gone.
And did he wander forth alone?
Alone, in indigence and age,
To linger out his pilgrimage?
No!—close beneath proud Newark's tower,
Arose the Minstrel's lowly bower;
A simple hut; but there was seen
The little garden hedged with green,
The cheerful hearth, and lattice clean.
There shelter'd wanderers, by the blaze,
Oft heard the tale of other days;
For much he loved to ope his door,
And give the aid he begg'd before.

555

560

565

So pass'd the winter's day; but still,
When summer smiled on sweet Bowhill,
And July's eve, with balmy breath,
Waved the blue-bells on Newark heath; 570
When throstles sung in Hairhead-shaw,
And corn was green on Carterhaugh,
And flourish'd, broad, Blackandro's oak,
The aged Harper's soul awoke!
Then would he sing achievements high, 575
And circumstance of chivalry,
Till the rapt traveller would stay,
Forgetful of the closing day;
And noble youths, the strain to hear,
Forsook the hunting of the deer; 580
And Yarrow, as he roll'd along,
Bore burden to the Minstrel song.

NOTES.

SCOTT annotated his own poems so fully that it must appear presumptuous in any one to attempt to add to the elucidation of the text. The editor must always feel as if the main part of his work had been done already—

‘And I come after, gleaning here and there,
And am full glad if I may find an ear
Of any goodly word that ye have left.’

The chief interest of any addition to Scott's commentary must lie in tracing the influence of his own character and his reading on the details of the poem. For example, till one goes into details, one would hardly believe how much the poem was affected by his attachment to his own name and clan, or how thoroughly he had assimilated the incidents and phrases of Border Minstrelsy. I have retained the substance and in most cases the words of all Scott's own illustrations, supplementing them where I could, and here and there making slight corrections. Most of the supplementary matter is taken from other writings of his on the poetry and the antiquities of the Border, especially his ‘Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border.’ Of this subject Scott had a minute and unrivalled knowledge. The only independent authority that has appeared since his time is Professor Veitch, himself a descendant from one of the oldest Border families, and more minutely learned, if possible, even than Scott in the facts of ancient Border life. His ‘History and Poetry of the Scottish Border’ is a substantial addition to Scott's illustration of Border customs and manners.

INTRODUCTION.

It was a happy afterthought with Scott to put his romance into the mouth of the last of the Minstrels. He thus saved himself the awkwardness of explaining in prose that his poem was an imitation of the antique. He explained in the Preface of 1830 that

the suggestion of something of the kind was made to him by one of the two friends to whom he submitted some experimental stanzas. This friend, he tells us, thought that 'some sort of prologue might be necessary, to place the mind of the hearers in the situation to understand and enjoy the poem, and recommended the adoption of such quaint mottoes as Spenser has used to announce the contents of the chapters of the Faery Queen, such as—

"Babe's bloody hands may not be cleansed.

The face of golden Mean:

Her sisters two, Extremities,

Strive her to banish clean."

'I entirely agreed,' Scott adds, 'with my friendly critic in the necessity of having some sort of pitch-pipe, which might make readers aware of the object, or rather the tone, of the publication. But I doubted whether, in assuming the oracular style of Spenser's mottoes, the interpreter might not be censured as the harder to be understood of the two. I therefore introduced the Old Minstrel, as an appropriate prolocutor, by whom the Lay might be sung, or spoken, and the introduction of whom betwixt the cantos might remind the reader at intervals, of the time, place, and circumstances of the recitation. This species of *cadre*, or frame, afterwards afforded the poem its name of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel."'

Though Scott gives his friend credit for part of the suggestion, the idea was not altogether new to him. He had figured himself as a 'minstrel,' writing at the command of a noble patroness, in his ballad of 'Cadyow Castle' in the Border Minstrelsy:

'Yet still, of Cadyow's faded fame,

You bid me tell a minstrel tale,

And tune my harp, of Border frame,

On the wild banks of Evandale.

'Then, noble maid! at thy command,

Again the crumbled halls shall rise;

Lo! as on Evan's banks we stand,

The past returns—the present flies.'

Similarly, the Lay, dealing with an imaginary incident in the history of the Buccleuch family, was written at the command of the Countess of Dalkeith. The relation of the old harper to the Duchess was an image of Scott's own relation to his patroness. Under the cloak of the Lay of the Minstrels, Scott more than once in the

course of the poem speaks playfully for himself and pays graceful compliments to the Countess. See end of Canto VI.

Apart from this allegorical reference, Scott shows his respect for historical accuracy in making 1690 the time of his Minstrel's recitation. The last famous wandering minstrel on the Borders, the 'violer' Nicol Burne, author of 'Leader Haughs and Yarrow,' lived till near the close of the seventeenth century, and was sheltered in his old age by the Scotts of Thirlstane, in the upper part of Ettrickdale. (Veitch's *Border Poetry*, p. 342.) Even the prototype of the Minstrel was connected with the Scotts.

1. 2. **The Minstrel.** There was a bitter dispute last century whether the ancient Minstrel was a dignified travelling poet who recited his own compositions to the harp, or only a strolling musician and singer, of similar rank to the modern organ-grinder. (See Ritson's 'Ancient Songs and Ballads.') Scott in his 'Border Minstrelsy' took a middle view, that there were minstrels, whether or not so named, of different degrees, and that the minstrel with the harp was not a mere romantic fiction. There are traces of this controversy in Scott's description of the Last Minstrel, who once sang to high dames and mighty earls, but was reduced to village churls before the Duchess gave him shelter.

Ritson was undoubtedly right thus far that the strolling poets of the Middle Ages, whether professional or amateur, were not called minstrels in the palmy days of the art. [See article on 'Minstrel' in *Encyclopaedia Britan.*] Scott was misled about the derivation of the word. 'The word Minstrel,' he says (Intro. to *Border Minstrelsy*), 'being in fact derived from the Minné-singer of the Germans, means, in its primary sense, one who *sings* of love.' The word is really derived from the old French *menestral*, Low Lat. *ministralis*, *ministerialis*, and means, according to Skeat, 'an artisan, servant, retainer, hence applied to the lazy train of retainers who played instruments, acted as buffoons and jesters, and the like.' But though this is the etymology of the word, it was universally used by our poets after Percy's time in the dignified sense defined by the learned Bishop, and for half a century was simply fashionable poetic diction for a poet.

1. 8. **Border Chivalry.** See Editor's Introduction. For the application of the word to Border worthies, we may quote the authority of the 'Song of the Outlaw Murray,' given in the *Border Minstrelsy*:

'God mot thee save, brave outlaw Murray,
Thy ladye, and all thy chyvalrye.'

l. 20. **A Stranger.** William III. A little trace of Scott's strong Jacobitish sentiment, in character with the Minstrel.

l. 21. The iron time is probably the Commonwealth, the allusion being to the ordinance of 1656 'that if any person or persons, commonly called fiddlers or minstrels, shall at any time be taken playing, fiddling, and making music, in any Inn, Alehouse, or Tavern, . . . every such person or persons, so taken, shall be adjudged, and are hereby adjudged and declared to be rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars.'

l. 27. **Newark's stately tower.** It was out of compliment to the Buccleuch family that Newark was chosen as the scene of the Minstrel's recitation. Scott, as the modern poet laureate of the Scott kindred—a position which pleased his feudal fancy as much as 'an established character with the public' gratified a more worldly ambition—kept everything as it were within the leading family, the framework of the story as well as the story itself. The lady whom he makes patroness of his Minstrel was the first Duchess of Buccleuch, created so in her own right on her marriage (in 1663) with the Duke of Monmouth, the rebellious illegitimate son of Charles II, Dryden's 'Absalom,' defeated at Sedgemoor, and executed in 1685. She was the daughter of one of the Earls of Buccleuch. It is not known for certain that she resided at Newark in her widowhood, but there is a tradition that she was born there, and Scott had a motive for placing her at Newark Castle in the fact that the ruins of it were just outside the park of Bowhill, the residence when he wrote of his own patroness, the Countess of Dalkeith. Scott at one time thought of buying a small property near Bowhill, where he would have lived under the shadow of the great house, as he makes the Minstrel live, when the Duchess takes the old man permanently under her protection.

ll. 28, 29. See Wordsworth's poems on the Yarrow, the most poetically sacred of Border streams.

'Once more, by Newark's Castle-gate,
Long left without a warder,
I stood, looked, listened, and with Thee,
Great Minstrel of the Border.' (Yarrow Revisited.)

'That region left, the vale unfolds
Rich groves of lofty stature,
With Yarrow winding through the pomp
Of cultivated Nature;

And rising from these lofty groves,
Behold a ruin hoary,
The shatter'd front of Newark's Towers,
Renowned in Border story.' (Yarrow Visited.)

Newark is described and its history given at length in Scott's 'Border Antiquities.' It was a royal fortress, built by James II, partly to overawe disorderly subjects, partly as a hunting-lodge for Ettrick Forest, a royal demesne. Newark Lee is mentioned in the spirited 'Song of the Outlaw Murray,' already referred to. In this ballad a Laird of Buccleuch, advising strong measures against the Outlaw, is thus rebuked by the King:—

'Now haud thy tongue, Sir Walter Scott,
Nor speik of reif nor felonie:
For had everye honeste man his awin kye [own cattle]
A right puir clan thy name wad be.'

A laird of Buccleuch, however, got possession of Newark and the Keepership of Ettrick Forest in the troubled times after the battle of Flodden.

l. 53. **Buccleuch**, Buck-cleuch. According to tradition, the founder of the family, John Scott, gained the favour of King Kenneth by a feat of strength—seizing a huge buck with his hands and carrying him on his back from the bottom of a deep cleuch or clough. (See Canto VI, l. 154.) But the tradition probably has its origin in the name, not in any actual incident, like a whole family of etymological traditions, of which the derivation of Gordon from 'gore down,' with a legend about the 'goring down' of a boar, is an example. 'Cleuch' is a common termination in the Ettrick Valley; e. g. Thorniecleuch, Drycleuch, Gamescleuch, &c.

l. 64. **Perchance he wished his boon denied.** Perchance Scott more than once, after undertaking to write a ballad about Gilpin Homer at the request of the Countess, repented in like manner of his rashness.

l. 80. Charles I was twice at Holyrood. He was crowned there in June, 1633, and he visited Edinburgh again in 1641. On both occasions, but particularly the last, he had very serious questions to discuss with very uneasy subjects touching Church government and ceremonial. But even in the view of strict history, it would be a permissible supposition that he found time to listen to harpers, if harpers were then of sufficient dignity to be admitted to entertain the Court on great state occasions. This last is more doubtful

historically. The age of the harper is in keeping. The time of his recitation before the Duchess is about 1690.

l. 89. I.e. his faded eye lightened up. Pitt, who read the Lay immediately on its appearance, was greatly struck with the scene between the old Harper and the ladies, and made the remark—'This is a sort of thing which I might have expected in painting, but could never have fancied capable of being given in poetry.' Scott was very proud of Pitt's approbation. 'Whatever,' he says in the Introduction of 1830, 'might have been his expectations, whether moderate or unreasonable, the result left them far behind, for among those who smiled on the adventurous Minstrel were numbered the great names of William Pitt and Charles Fox.'

CANTO I.

The Introduction being written in regular four-beat complets, each line beginning with an unaccented syllable, and each accented syllable being separated from the next by an unaccented, the effect of the variations introduced by Coleridge and Scott can be judged by comparing the metre of the Introduction with the metre of the Canto. The metrical basis is the same, a line of four beats or accents.

Stanza I. In this stanza the last line is the only regular one, and only 4 and 5 have the same rhythm. Over in the first line should be pronounced as a dissyllable:

'The féast was óver in Bránksome tówer,
And the Ládye had góne to her sécret bówer:
Her bówer that was guárded by wórd and by spéll,
Déadly to héar, and déadly to téll—
Jésu María, shíeld us wéll!
No líving wíght, save the Ládye alóne,
Had dáred to cróss the thréshold stóne.'

The sudden change of rhythm in l. 4 is very impressive. It has always a strong effect to begin a line with an accent. For the rhythm we may compare the opening lines of Christabel:

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock.'

The third line is an imitation of l. 127 of Christabel:

'All in the middle of the gate;
The gate that was ironed within and without.'

Scott acknowledged having taken the fifth line bodily from Christabel (l. 54):

‘Hush, beating heart of Christabel!

Jesu, Maria, shield her well!’

l. i. Branksome. Scott explains in a note on this line that ‘Brankholm is the proper name of the barony; but Branksome has been adopted, as suitable to the pronunciation, and more proper for poetry.’ In the same place he relates how Branksome came into the possession of the Buccleuch family. In the reign of James I, Sir William Scott of Buccleuch exchanged with another Border chief, Sir Thomas Inglis, his estate of Murdieston in Lanarkshire for one half of the barony of Branksome. ‘Tradition imputes the exchange betwixt Scott and Inglis to a conversation, in which the latter—a man, it would appear, of a mild and forbearing nature—complained much of the injuries which he was exposed to from the English Borderers, who frequently plundered his lands of Branksome. Sir William Scott instantly offered him the estate of Murdiestone, in exchange for that which was subject to such egregious inconvenience. When the bargain was completed, he dryly remarked, that the cattle in Cumberland were as good as those of Teviotdale; and proceeded to commence a system of reprisals upon the English, which was regularly pursued by his successors.’

This was the beginning of the greatness of the House of Buccleuch. From this time forward they held their own and more than their own, as the ballad already quoted implies, on the Borders, and took an active part in the turbulent politics of Scotland, without suffering any of the misfortunes that overtook other active families. The Chief in the reign of James II stood by the King against the Douglasses, and obtained as reward a grant of the other half of the barony of Branksome, and many lands in Lanarkshire.

The appearance of Branksome now hardly accords with what Scott says about the strength of the position. It is in fact very disappointing to readers of the Lay, if they expect reality to be like romance. The bank on which the old castle stood, on the Teviot, three miles above Hawick, is not ‘precipitous,’ as it is sometimes described. The place must have owed its strength more to art than to nature. The remains of foundations are too slight to give an exact idea of the character of the fortress, but the castles of the Scottish chiefs were much less extensive structures than those on the other side of the Border, to which, rather than to any real Branksome, the references in the poem would apply. As the bard of his clan, the

Minstrel took a bard's licence in speaking of its grandeur. A thick-walled square tower, incorporated with the modern building, was part of the old castle, built, as an inscription above the door records, in 1571-6. This was after the date of the imagined events of the Lay. The Branksome Tower in which they are laid was burnt and destroyed during the devastation of the Borders under the Earl of Sussex in 1570, in revenge for a raid upon England led by the Scotts and the Kerrs, who had combined for once against the common enemy. The Sir Walter Scott of that time should correspond with the boy-heir of Buccleuch in the poem.

1. 8. *idlesse*, an artificial archaism, an A.S. word with an O. Fr. ending. Chaucer uses *idilnesse*.

1. 13. **Rushy floor.** Rushes strewn on the floor served the purpose of carpets in those days. The English were later than the continental nations in adopting the fashion of carpets. That they strewed their floors with hay was remarked by foreign travellers as a barbarism in the age of Elizabeth.

Stanza III. Scott quotes the authority of Satchells for the splendour of the establishment at Branksome:

'No baron was better served in Britain;
The barons of Buckleugh they kept their call,
Four and twenty gentlemen in their hall,
All being of his name and kin;
Each two had a servant to wait upon them
Before supper and dinner, most renowned,
The bells rung and the trumpets sowned.'

There were, besides, twenty-four 'pensioners,' 'younger brothers of ancient families,' holding lands from Buccleuch for Border service, not resident at Branksome, but 'ready on all occasions, when his honour pleased cause to advertise them.' Scott, it will be observed, has improved upon the earlier poet of the clan in his picture of the baronial grandeur of the Chief.

Stanza IV. Scott uses the bard's licence to make romantic heroes men of more than mortal mould. If a real mediaeval knight had worn steel harness day and night, he would have been of small use in the field. The heavy helmet was generally borne by page or squire even on the way to battle, or in traversing an enemy's country. See Canto III, st. iii. The whole of this picture of knights on the watch is too melodramatically romantic, especially the drinking of the wine through the barred helmet. Border raids, of course, were sudden, but not so sudden that the warriors could not get warning

by beacon or messenger in time to put on their armour. At any rate they were not so hard pressed as to be unable to raise their visors or their beavers.

l. 39. *Jedwood-axe*. 'Of a truth,' says Froissart, 'the Scottish cannot boast great skill with the bow, but rather bear axes, with which, in time of need, they give heavy strokes.' The *Jedwood-axe* was a sort of partisan, used by horsemen, as appears from the arms of *Jedburgh*, which bear a cavalier mounted, and armed with this weapon. It is also called a *Jedwood* or *Jeddart staff*.—SCOTT.

Stanza V explains the vigilant state of preparation at *Branksome*. The Borderers on each side had to be constantly on the watch against sudden raids from the other side. *Buccleuch* was Warden of the West Marches of Scotland. *Warkworth*, in Northumberland, was the residence of *Percy*, Earl of Northumberland; *Naworth*, in Cumberland, of Lord William Howard; *Carlisle*, of Lord Scroop—Wardens of the English Marches. The noblemen mentioned were not all Wardens at the date of the story, but the poet of course did not hold himself bound to exact historical accuracy in such details. These three were not the only English fortresses from which inroads were to be feared. There was a regular chain of fortresses from *Berwick* to *Carlisle*, *Norham*, *Wark*, *Etal*, *Ford*, *Cornhill*, *Twizell*, *Askerton*, *Hexham*.

In illustration of the degree to which *Branksome*, 'both from its situation and the restless military disposition of its inhabitants,' was exposed to incursions from England, Scott quotes an interesting letter from the Earl of Northumberland to Henry VIII, giving an account of an inroad from *Warkworth* on the Scottish Border in 1533. The foray was made at night. *Percy* assembled his men to the number of 1500 at *Wauchope*, on North Tyne water, above *Tynedale*. They crossed the frontier at eight o'clock in the evening, and came within striking distance of *Branksome* about eleven. Then *Percy* practised a device familiar in the irregular warfare of the time, trying to draw *Buccleuch* into an ambuscade. Forayers of *Tynedale* and *Redesdale* were sent on in advance to burn and plunder up to the gates of *Branksome*, as if it were merely a raid upon the Scotts by their English neighbours, while the main body lay in ambush, ready to fall upon any pursuers whom the skirmishers might draw out of *Branksome*. Sundry of the Laird of *Buccleuch*'s servants did issue forth, and were captured; but the Laird himself was too wary to be caught in that way. *Percy* therefore spent the night in laying waste the country, and 'did not leave one house, one stack of corn, nor

one sheaf without the gate of the said Lord Buccleuch unburnt,' always hoping that Buccleuch himself would appear, and be drawn into the ambush. At break of day the incursionists retired with prisoners and plunder to their own borders. Though Buccleuch had kept quiet before superior strength, he did not wait long before retaliating. Along with other Border chiefs, he assembled a force of 3000 riders, penetrated into Northumberland, laid waste the country as far as the banks of Bramish, and returned loaded with booty.

1. 58. *How Lord Walter fell.* Scott has a long note on this passage, explaining the origin of the feud between the Scotts and the Kerrs. If the Lay had been constructed as a complete epic, the history of this feud would have been included in it. The subject of the Lay is an imaginary episode in this long-standing enmity. The note is as follows :—

'Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch succeeded to his grandfather, Sir David, in 1492. He was a brave and powerful baron, and Warden of the West Marches of Scotland. His death was the consequence of a feud betwixt the Scotts and Kerrs, the history of which is necessary, to explain repeated allusions in the romance.

'In the year 1526, in the words of Pitscottie, "The Earl of Angus, and the rest of the Douglasses, ruled all which they liked, and no man durst say the contrary; wherefore the King (James V, then a minor) was heavily displeased, and would fain have been out of their hands, if he might by any way: And to that effect wrote a quiet and secret letter with his own hand, and sent it to the Laird of Buccleuch, beseeching him that he would come with his kin and friends, and all the force that might be, and meet him at Melross, at his home passing, and there to take him out of the Douglasses hands, and to put him to liberty, to use himself among the lave (*rest*) of his lords, as he thinks expedient.

"This letter was quietly directed, and sent by one of the King's own secret servants, which was received very thankfully by the Laird of Buccleuch, who was very glad thereof, to be put to such charges and familiarity with his prince, and did great diligence to perform the King's writing, and to bring the matter to pass as the King desired: And to that effect, convened all his kin and friends, and all that would do for him, to ride with him to Melross, when he knew of the King's homecoming. And so he brought with him six hundred spears, of Liddesdale, and Annandale, and countrymen, and clans thereabout, and held themselves quiet while that the King

returned out of Jedburgh, and came to Melross, to remain there all that night.

“But when the Lord Hume, Cessfoord, and Fernyhirst, (the chiefs of the clan of Kerr,) took their leave of the King, and returned home, then appeared the Lord of Buccleuch in sight, and his company with him, in an arrayed battle, intending to have fulfilled the King's petition, and therefore came stoutly forward on the back side of Haliden hill. By that the Earl of Angus, with George Douglas, his brother, and sundry other of his friends, seeing this army coming, they marvelled what the matter meant; while at the last they knew the Laird of Buccleuch, with a certain company of the thieves of Annandale. With him they were less affeared, and made them manfully to the field contrary them, and said to the King in this manner, ‘Sir, yon is Buccleuch, and thieves of Annandale with him, to unbeset your Grace from the gate,’ (i.e. interrupt your passage). ‘I vow to God they shall either fight or flee; and ye shall tarry here on this know, and my brother George with you, with any other company you please; and I shall pass, and put yon thieves off the ground, and rid the gate unto your Grace, or else die for it.’ The King tarried still, as was devised; and George Douglas with him, and sundry other lords, such as the Earl of Lennox, and the Lord Erskine, and some of the King's own servants; but all the lave (*rest*) past with the Earl of Angus to the field against the Laird of Buccleuch, who joyned and countered cruelly both the said parties in the field of Darnelinv¹, either against other, with uncertain victory. But at the last, the Lord Hume, hearing word of that matter how it stood, returned again to the King in all possible haste, with him the Lairds of Cessfoord and Fernyhirst, to the number of four-score spears, and set freshly on the lap and wing of the Laird of Buccleuch's field, and shortly bare them backward to the ground; which caused the Laird of Buccleuch, and the rest of his friends, to go back and flee, whom they followed and chased; and especially the Lairds of Cessfoord and Fernyhirst followed furiously, till at the foot of a path the Laird of Cessfoord was slain by the stroke of a spear by an Elliot, who was then servant to the Laird of Buccleuch. But when the Laird of Cessfoord was slain, the chase ceased. The Earl of Angus returned again with great merriness and victory, and thanked God that he saved him from that chance, and passed with

¹ Darnwick, near Melrose. The place of conflict is still called Skinner's Field, from a corruption of *Skirmish Field*.

the King to Melross, where they remained all that night. On the morn they past to Edinburgh with the King, who was very sad and dolorous of the slaughter of the Laird of Cessford, and many other gentlemen and yeomen slain by the Laird of Buccleuch, containing the number of fourscore and fifteen, which died in defence of the King, and at the command of his writing."

'In consequence of the battle of Melrose, there ensued a deadly feud betwixt the names of Scott and Kerr, which, in spite of all means used to bring about an agreement, raged for many years upon the Borders. Buccleuch was imprisoned, and his estates forfeited, in the year 1535, for levying war against the Kerrs, and restored by act of Parliament, dated 15th March, 1542, during the regency of Mary of Lorraine. But the most signal act of violence to which this quarrel gave rise was the murder of Sir Walter himself, who was slain by the Kerrs in the streets of Edinburgh in 1552. This is the event alluded to in stanza vii.; and the poem is supposed to open shortly after it had taken place.

'The feud between these two families was not reconciled in 1596, when both chieftains paraded the streets of Edinburgh with their followers, and it was expected their first meeting would decide their quarrel. But, on July 14th of the same year, Colvil, in a letter to Mr. Bacon, informs him, "that there was great trouble upon the Borders, which would continue till order should be taken by the Queen of England and the King, by reason of the two young Scots chieftains, Cessford and Baclugh, and of the present necessity and scarcity of corn amongst the Scots Borderers and riders. That there had been a private quarrel betwixt those two lairds on the Borders, which was like to have turned to blood; but the fear of the general trouble had reconciled them, and the injuries which they thought to have committed against each other were now transferred upon England: not unlike that emulation in France between the Baron de Biron and Mons. Jeverie, who, being both ambitious of honour, undertook more hazardous enterprises against the enemy than they would have done if they had been at concord together."—*Birch's Memorials*, vol. ii. p. 67.'

l. 63. slogan, war-cry, *cri de guerre*, shouted by combatants as they rallied or rushed to the encounter. Generally the name of a chief, or a patron saint, or a familiar gathering-place. 'St. George for Merry England!' 'St. Mary for the bold Buccleuch!' There is a description in Scott's 'Abbot' of a street fight such as that in which Lord Walter fell. 'About a score of weapons at once flashed

in the sun, and there was an immediate clatter of swords and bucklers, while the followers on either side cried their master's name; the one shouting, "Help! a Leslie! a Leslie!" while the others answered with shouts of "Seyton! Seyton!" with the additional punning slogan, "Set on! Set on! Bear the knaves to the ground."

l. 70. In mutual pilgrimage. In 1529, three years after the battle of Melrose, the chiefs of the clans of Scott and Kerr, at the King's special command, bound themselves over to keep the peace in a solemn 'bond of alliance or feud-stanching.' This curious document is printed in the *Border Minstrelsy*. The five subscribers on each side, Walter Scott of Branxholm at the head of the one party, and Walter Ker of Cessford of the other, sign 'for themselves, kin, friends, men tenants, assisters, allies, adherents, and partakers,' each 'remitting and forgiving' to the other 'the rancour, hatred, and malice of their hearts.' They agree to refer all outstanding disputes between them to the judgment of six chosen arbiters. They promise in future to be good friends, promising 'by the faith and truth of their bodies' to support one another in all quarrels. And in testimony of their mutual forgiveness, the chief of each party is to say masses for those that fell on the other side in the field of Melrose, at the four head pilgrimages of Scotland, namely, Scone, Dundee, Paisley, and Melrose.

One of the articles of this indenture is that 'Walter Scott of Branxholm shall marry his son and heir upon one of the said Walter Ker his sisters.' Of this historical son and heir the Lay naturally says nothing, but Scott might fairly have mentioned the proposal to stanch the feud by marriage as evidence of his substantial truth to Border history.

l. 73. the rule of Carr. 'The family of Ker, Kerr, or Carr' [Scott selected the spelling Carr 'not as the most correct but as the most poetical reading'] 'was very powerful on the Border. Fynes Morrison remarks, in his *Travels*, that their influence extended from the village of Preston-Grange, in Lothian, to the limits of England. Cessford Castle, the ancient baronial residence of the family, is situated near the village of Morebattle, within two or three miles of the Cheviot Hills. It has been a place of great strength and consequence, but is now ruinous. Tradition affirms that it was founded by Halbert, or Habby Kerr, a gigantic warrior, concerning whom many stories are current in Roxburghshire. The Duke of Roxburgh represents Ker of Cessford. A distinct and powerful branch of the

same name own the Marquis of Lothian as their chief. Hence the distinction betwixt Kerrs of Cessford and Fairnihurst.'—SCOTT.

ll. 90-1. These lines are reproduced from the ballad 'Johnny Armstrong's Last Good Night':—

'O then bespoke his little son,
As he sat on his nurse's knee,
"If ever I live to be a man
My father's death revenged shall be."

Similar lines occur in another ballad, 'The Lads of Wamphray.' Scott may have regarded them as common ballad property.

l. 109. *Lord Cranstoun*. The Cranstouns are an ancient Border family, whose chief seat was at Crailing, in Teviotdale. They were at this time at feud with the clan of Scott; for it appears that the Lady of Buccleuch, in 1557, beset the Laird of Cranstoun, seeking his life. Nevertheless, the same Cranstoun, or perhaps his son, was married to a daughter of the same lady. In dovetailing the Lay into Border history, Scott takes the liberty of putting Cranstoun at the battle of Melrose. As this took place twenty-seven years before the events of the Lay, it makes the lover somewhat old. One does not understand why Scott did not make Margaret's lover the son of his Melrose Cranstoun.

l. 113. *Bethune*. 'The Bethunes were of French origin, and derived their name from a small town in Artois. There were several distinguished families of the Bethunes in the neighbouring province of Picardy; they numbered among their descendants the celebrated Duc de Sully; and the name was accounted among the most noble in France, while aught noble remained in that country¹. The family of Bethune, or Beatoun, in Fife, produced three learned and dignified prelates; namely, Cardinal Beaton, and two successive Archbishops of Glasgow, all of whom flourished about the date of the romance. Of this family was descended Dame Janet Beaton, Lady Buccleuch, widow of Sir Walter Scott of Branksome. She was a woman of masculine spirit, as appeared from her riding at the head of her son's clan, after her husband's murder. She also possessed the hereditary abilities of her family in such a degree that the superstition of the vulgar imputed them to supernatural knowledge. With this was mingled, by faction, the foul accusation of her having influenced

¹ In a note to edition of 1821 Scott added:— 'This expression and sentiment were dictated by the situation of France in the year 1803, when the poem was originally written.'

Queen Mary to the murder of her husband. One of the placards, preserved in Buchanan's Detection, accuses of Darnley's murder "the Erle of Bothwell, Mr. James Balfour, the persoun of Fliske, Mr. David Chalmers, black Mr. John Spens, who was principal deviser of the murder; and the Quene, assenting thairto, throw the persuasion of the Erle Bothwell, and *the witchcraft of Lady Buckleuch.*"—SCOTT.

l. 115. 'Padua was long supposed, by the Scottish peasants, to be the principal school of necromancy. The Earl of Gowrie, slain at Perth, in 1600, pretended, during his studies in Italy, to have acquired some knowledge of the cabala, by which, he said, he could charm snakes, and work other miracles; and, in particular, could produce children without the intercourse of the sexes.—See the examination of Wemyss of Bogie before the Privy Council, concerning Gowrie's Conspiracy.'—SCOTT. The University of Padua, 'nursery of arts,' to which Shakespeare's Lucentio was sent (*Taming of the Shrew*, l. 1), was one of the most famous in Europe in the Middle Ages.

l. 120. *no darkening shadow.* 'The shadow of a necromancer is independent of the sun. Glycas informs us that Simon Magus caused his shadow to go before him, making people believe it was an attendant spirit.—*Heywood's Hierarchy*, p. 475. The vulgar conceive, that when a class of students have made a certain progress in their mystic studies, they are obliged to run through a subterraneous hall, where the devil literally catches the hindmost in the race, unless he crosses the hall so speedily that the arch-enemy can only apprehend his shadow. In the latter case, the person of the sage never after throws any shade; and those, who have thus *lost their shadow*, always prove the best magicians.'—SCOTT.

l. 125. *The viewless forms of air.* 'The Scottish vulgar, without having any very defined notion of their attributes, believe in the existence of an intermediate class of spirits, residing in the air, or in the waters; to whose agency they ascribe floods, storms, and all such phenomena as their own philosophy cannot readily explain. They are supposed to interfere in the affairs of mortals, sometimes with a malevolent purpose, and sometimes with milder views. . . . To those spirits were also ascribed, in Scotland, the

—"Airy tongues, that syllable men's names,
On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses."

'When the workmen were engaged in erecting the ancient church of Old Deer, in Aberdeenshire, upon a small hill called Bissau, they

were surprised to find that the work was impeded by supernatural obstacles. At length, the Spirit of the River was heard to say—

“It is not here, it is not here,
That ye shall build the church of Deer;
But on Taptillery,
Where many a corpse shall lie.”

The site of the edifice was accordingly transferred to Taptillery, an eminence at some distance from the place where the building had been commenced.—*Macfarlane's MSS.* I mention these popular fables, because the introduction of the River and Mountain Spirits may not, at first sight, seem to accord with the general tone of the romance, and the superstitions of the country where the scene is laid.’—SCOTT.

L. 127. **Lord David.** The castle of Branksome was enlarged and strengthened by Sir David Scott, grandson of Sir William, the first possessor. The Ladye sits in the western tower, from which she could look up the Teviot, to the fells on which the moonbeams were playing:

L. 132. Is it, &c. Compare ‘Christabel,’ l. 44—
‘Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?’

And ‘St. Swithin’s Chair’ in ‘Waverley’:

‘Is it the moody owl that shrieks?
Or is it that sound, ’twixt laughter and scream,
The voice of the Demon that haunts the stream?’

L. 146. ‘From the gróan of the wind-swung óak,
Fróm the súllen echó of the rók,
Fróm the vóice of the cóming stórn.’

The poet takes a liberty with the accent of ‘echo.’ The accent on ‘from’ is also artificial, but the lines may be scanned with three accents.

L. 154. **Craikeross and Skelfhill Pen** are two high hills on opposite sides of the upper waters of the Teviot. Professor Veitch suggests to me that Scott may have chosen Craikeross from its occurrence in Thomas the Rymer’s lines:—

‘Atween Craik Cross and Eildon-tree
Is a’ the safety there shall be.’

L. 155. ‘In olde dayes of the Kyng Arthour,
Of which that Britouns speken gret honour,
Al was this lond fulfilled of fayrie;
The elf-queen, with her joly compaignye,
Daunced ful oft in many a greene mede.’

(Chaucer, ‘Wife of Bath’s Tale.’)

1. 156. *morris*. *Moorish* dance. A moonlight night was the favourite time for this exercise. Cf. Garrick's 'Thou soft-flowing Avon'—

'The fairies by moonlight dance round his green bed,

For hallowed the turf is that pillows his head.'

In a Jacobean 'Masque of the Four Seasons,' morrice dancers or 'moriscoes,' brought in by Spring, have anklets, armlets, and girdles, hung with bells. The morris was in fashion at the Court of James IV of Scotland. See Dunbar's Poems, Scottish Text Society, p. 206—

'Sum singis; sum dancis; sum tellis storeis;

Sum lait at evin bringis in the moreis.'

1. 197. *moss-trooper*. 'This was the usual appellation of the marauders upon the Borders; a profession diligently pursued by the inhabitants on both sides, and by none more actively and successfully than by Buccleuch's clan. Long after the union of the crowns, the moss-troopers, although sunk in reputation, and no longer enjoying the pretext of national hostility, continued to pursue their calling.

Fuller includes, among the wonders of Cumberland, "The moss-troopers: so strange in the condition of their living, if considered in their *Original, Increase, Height, Decay, and Ruine*.

"1. *Original*. I conceive them the same called Borderers in Mr. Camden; and characterised by him to be a *wild and warlike people*. They are called *moss-troopers*, because dwelling in the mosses, and riding in troops together. They dwell in the bounds, or meeting, of the two kingdoms, but obey the laws of neither. They come to church as seldom as the 29th of February comes into the kalendar.

"2. *Increase*. When England and Scotland were united in Great Britain, they that formerly lived by hostile incursions, betook themselves to the robbing of their neighbours. Their sons are free of the trade by their fathers' copy. They are like to Job, not in piety and patience, but in sudden plenty and poverty; sometimes having flocks and herds in the morning, none at night, and perchance many again next day. They may give for their motto, *vivitur ex rapto*, stealing from their honest neighbours what they sometimes require. They are a nest of hornets; strike one, and stir all of them about your ears. Indeed, if they promise safely to conduct a traveller, they will perform it with the fidelity of a Turkish janizary; otherwise, woe be to him that falleth into their quarters!

"3. *Height*. Amounting, forty years since, to some thousands.

These compelled the vicinage to purchase their security, by paying a constant rent to them. When in their greatest height, they had two great enemies,—the *Laws of the Land*, and the *Lord William Howard of Naworth*. He sent many of them to Carlisle, to that place where the officer *doth always his work by daylight*. Yet these moss-troopers, if possibly they could procure the pardon for a condemned person of their company, would advance great sums out of their common stock, who, in such a case, *cast in their lots amongst themselves, and all have one purse*.

“4. *Decay*. Caused by the wisdom, valour, and diligence of the Right Honourable Charles Lord Howard, Earl of Carlisle, who routed these English Tories with his regiment. His severity unto them will not only be excused, but commended, by the judicious, who consider how our great lawyer doth describe such persons, who are solemnly outlawed.—*Bracton*, lib. viii. trac. 2. cap. 11—‘*Ex tunc gerunt caput lupinum, ita quod sine judiciali inquisitione rite pereant, et secum suum judicium portant; et merito sine lege pereunt, qui secundum legem vivere recusarunt*.’—‘Thenceforward (after that they are outlawed) they wear a wolf’s head, so that they lawfully may be destroyed, without any judicial inquisition, as who carry their own condemnation about them, and deservedly die without law, because they refused to live according to law.’

“5. *Ruine*. Such was the success of this worthy lord’s severity, that he made a thorough reformation among them; and the ring-leaders being destroyed, the rest are reduced to legal obedience, and so, I trust, will continue.”—*Fuller’s Worthies of England*, p. 216.

‘The last public mention of moss-troopers occurs during the civil wars of the 17th century, when many ordinances of Parliament were directed against them.’—SCOTT.

l. 207. ‘This line, of which the metre appears defective, would have its full complement of feet according to the pronunciation of the poet himself—as all who were familiar with his utterance of the letter *r* will bear testimony.’—LOCKHART. *Unicorn’s*. The reference is to the arms of the Kerrs and Scotts, unicorns figuring in the one, crescents and a star in the other. ‘The arms of the Kerrs of Cessford were, *Vert* on a cheveron, betwixt three unicorns’ heads *crased argent*, three mullets *sable*; crest, a unicorn’s head, *crased proper*. The Scotts of Buccleuch bore, *Or*, on a bend *azure*; a star of six points betwixt two crescents of the first.’—SCOTT. The arms of the Scotts were said to be emblematic of their exploits as midnight

marauders—'minions of the moon.' But this may have been a Border jest.

1. 214. William of Deloraine. 'The lands of Deloraine are joined to those of Buccleuch in Ettrick Forest. They were immemorially possessed by the Buccleuch family, under the strong title of occupancy, although no charter was obtained from the crown until 1545. Like other possessions, the lands of Deloraine were occasionally granted by them to vassals, or kinsmen, for Border service. Satchells mentions, among the twenty-four gentlemen-pensioners of the family, "William Scott, commonly called *Cut-at-the-Black*, who had the lands of Nether Deloraine for his service." And again, "This William of Deloraine, commonly called *Cut-at-the-Black*, was a brother of the ancient house of Haining, which house of Haining is descended from the ancient house of Hassendean." The lands of Deloraine now give an Earl's title to the descendant of Henry, the second surviving son of the Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth. I have endeavoured to give William of Deloraine the attributes which characterised the Borderers of his day; for which I can only plead Froissart's apology, that "it behoveth in a lynage, some to be folyshe and outrageous, to maynteyne and sustayne the peasable." As a contrast to my Marchman, I beg leave to transcribe, from the same author, the speech of Amergot Marcell, a captain of the Adventurous Companions, a robber and a pillager of the country of Auvergne, who had been bribed to sell his strongholds, and to assume a more honourable military life under the banners of the Earl of Armagnac. But "when he remembered alle this, he was sorrowful; his tresour he thought he wolde not mynyshe; he was wonte dayly to serche for newe pyllages, wherbye encreased his profyte, and then he sawe that alle was closed fro' hym. Then he sayde and imagyned, that to pyll and to robbe (all thyng considered) was a good lyfe, and so repented hym of his good doing. On a tyme, he said to his old companions, 'Sirs, there is no sporte nor glory in this worlde amonge men of warre, but to use suche lyfe as we have done in tyme past. What a joy was it to us when we rode forth at adventure, and somtyme found by the way a riche priour or merchaunt, or a route of mulettes of Mountpellyer, of Narbonne, of Lymens, of Fongans, of Besyers, of Tholous, or of Carcassonne, laden with cloth of Brussels, or peltre ware comynge fro the fayres, or laden with spycery fro Bruges, fro Damas, or fro Alysaundre; whatsoever we met, all was ours, or els ransomed at our pleasures; dayly we gate

new money, and the vyllaynes of Auvergne and Lymosyn dayly provyded and brought to our castell whete mele, good wynes, beffes, and fatte mottions, pullayne, and wylde foule: We were ever furnyshed as tho we had been kings. When we rode forthe, all the cuntry trymbled for feare: all was ours goyng and comynge. How tok we Carlast, I and the Bourge of Companye, and I and Perot of Bernoys took Caluset; how dyd we scale, with lytell ayde, the strong castell of Marquell, pertayning to the Erl Dolphyn: I kept it nat past fyve days, but I receyved for it, on a feyre table, fyve thousande frankes, and forgave one thousande for the love of the Erl Dolphin's children. By my sayth, this was a fayre and a good lyfe! wherefore I repute myselfe sore deceyved, in that I have rendered up the fortress of Aloys; for it wolde have kept fro alle the worlde, and the daye that I gave it up, it wasournyshed with vytaylles, to have been kept seven yere without any revytayllinge. This Erl of Armynake hath deceyved me: Olyve Barbe, and Perot le Bernoys, shewed to me how I shulde repente myselfe: certayne I sore repente myselfe of what I have done.'—*Froissart*, vol. ii. p. 195.—SCOTT.

1. 218. *the paths to cross.* In his Introduction to the Border Minstrelsy Scott quotes a passage from Camden's *Britannia* concerning the Borderers, which explains why a knowledge of safe paths through sands and mosses was an important matter for the moss-trooper. 'What manner of cattle stealers they are, that inhabit these valleys in the marches of both kingdoms, John Lesley, a Scotchman himself, and bishop of Ross, will inform you. They sally out of their own borders, in the night, in troops, through unfrequented bye-ways, and many intricate windings. All the day time, they refresh themselves and their horses, in lurking holes they had pitched upon before, till they arrive in the dark at those places they have a design upon. As soon as they have seized upon the booty, they, in like manner, return home in the night, through blind ways, and fetching many a compass. The more skilful any captain is to pass through those wild deserts, crooked turnings, and deep precipices, in the thickest mists and darkness, his reputation is the greater.' Solway Sands are described in Letter IV. of *Redgumtlet*.

1. 220. *blood-hounds.* 'The kings and heroes of Scotland, as well as the Border-riders, were sometimes obliged to study how to evade the pursuit of blood-hounds. Barbour informs us, that Robert Bruce was repeatedly tracked by sleuth-dogs. On one occasion, he escaped by wading a bow-shot down a brook, and ascending into a tree by a

branch which overhung the water; thus, leaving no trace on land of his footsteps, he baffled the scent. The pursuers came up:

"Rycht to the burn thai passyt ware,
Bot the slenth-hund made stinting thar,
And waueryt lang tyme ta and fra,
That he na certain gate couth ga;
Till at the last that John of Lorne
Perseuivit the hund the sleuth had lorne."

'The Bruce,' Book vii.

'A sure way of stopping the dog was to spill blood upon the track, which destroyed the discriminating fineness of his scent. A captive was sometimes sacrificed on such occasions. Henry the Minstrel tells a romantic story of Wallace, founded on this circumstance:—The hero's little band had been joined by an Irishman, named Fawdoun, or Fadzean, a dark, savage, and suspicious character. After a sharp skirmish at Black-Erne Side, Wallace was forced to retreat with only sixteen followers. The English pursued with a Border *sleuth-bratch*, or blood-hound.

"In Gelderland there was that bratchet bred,
Siker of scent, to follow them that fled;
So was he used in Eske and Liddesdail,
While (i.e. *till*) she gat blood no fleeing might avail."

'In the retreat Fawdoun, tired, or affecting to be so, would go no farther. Wallace having in vain argued with him, in hasty anger, struck off his head, and continued the retreat. When the English came up, their hound stayed upon the dead body:—

"The sleuth stopped at Fawdon, still she stood,
Nor farther would fra time she fund the blood."

'The story concludes with a fine Gothic scene of terror. Wallace took refuge in the solitary tower of Gask. Here he was disturbed at midnight by the blast of a horn. He sent out his attendants by two and two, but no one returned with tidings. At length, when he was left alone, the sound was heard still louder. The champion descended, sword in hand; and, at the gate of the tower, was encountered by the headless spectre of Fawdoun, whom he had slain so rashly. Wallace, in great terror, fled up into the tower, tore open the boards of a window, leaped down fifteen feet in height, and continued his flight up the river. Looking back to Gask, he discovered the tower on fire, and the form of Fawdoun upon the battlements, dilated to an immense size, and holding in his hand a blazing rafter.'—SCOTT.

L. 231. good at need. The epithet is twice repeated in the Homeric

manner later on in the poem. It occurs in 'The Raid of the Reids-wire,' Border Minstrelsy.

'Wi' Cranstane, Gladstain, good at need.'

l. 232. the wightest steed. Cf. the ballad of 'Prince Robert,' Border Minstrelsy—

'But the steed it was wight and the ladye was light,
And she cam linkin in.'

l. 235. Melrose. See note on Canto I, l. 334.

l. 241. St. Michael's night = Michaelmas, 29th September. The wizard (for whom see note on Canto II, l. 138) was buried at one o'clock on St. Michael's night in such a position that the moon shining through a window made a cross over his grave on the red floor of the chancel. See Canto II, st. xv. His 'mighty book' of spells was buried with him, to be sought for only by the chief of his clan in an hour of supreme need. When the Ladye became aware of the danger of a union between her daughter and a bitter enemy, she judged that the hour had come to win this 'treasure of the tomb.'

l. 258. 'The neck-verse is the beginning of the 51st Psalm *Miserere mei*, etc., anciently read by criminals claiming the benefit of clergy.'—SCOTT. The clergy originally obtained freedom from secular jurisdiction on the strength of the text, 'Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.' In process of time this benefit of clergy was claimed for everybody that could read, all such persons being handed over to be dealt with by ecclesiastical authority. If not handed over to the church, the convicted criminal was burnt in the brawn of his left thumb, and not allowed the privilege a second time. The last remains of the privilege were not abolished till the reign of George IV. With Deloraine's ignorance of letters, compare Dickie of Dryhope in the ballad of 'Kinmont Willie'—

'Now Dickie of Dryhope led that band,
And the never a word o' lear had he.'

Or the boast of the Earl of Angus in 'Marmion'—

'Thanks to St. Bothan, son of mine,
Save Gawain, ne'er could spell a line.'

Hairibee. The place of execution, the Tyburn, of Carlisle. The ballad of 'Kinmont Willie' begins—

'O haue ye na heard o' the fause Sakelde?
O haue ye na heard o' the keen Lord Scroope?
How they haue ta'en bauld Kinmont Willie,
On Haribee to hang him up.'

l. 260. steep descent. The entrance to a feudal castle from the grated portal inwards was generally steep, and paved with smooth

pebbles, making the footing uncertain. This first part of Deloraine's ride was not the least difficult.

l. 261. *barbican*, O.Fr. *barbacane*, 'the defence of the outer gate of a feudal castle.'—SCOTT. The epithet 'sounding' indicates that Scott probably took his idea of a barbican from Alnwick Castle, where there is a very fine gate and barbican of the Edwardian period. (See Clark's 'Mediaeval Military Architecture,' vol. i. p. 180.) The barbican is 55 feet long, strong masonry protecting a passage to the gate about 10 feet broad. The outer part of the passage is vaulted to the length of about 20 feet, the rest open to the sky. This explains the epithet 'sounding.' The real Branksome Tower in all likelihood had no such magnificent adjunct. It is what Scott would have called a 'poetical ornament.'

l. 264. *basnet* = basinet, a basin-shaped helmet. The poet makes Deloraine undertake his midnight ride in complete armour (see l. 312). This also is 'poetical ornament.'

l. 265. *Peel*, is defined by Clark ('Med. Mil. Arch.' i. 247) as 'a stronghold of which the tower is the only considerable work, and which stands within a walled base-court or barmkin of moderate area.' These simple square towers are characteristic of the Scottish Border. Borthwick Tower in Midlothian is the finest specimen. They depended for their powers of resistance on passive strength. The walls were so thick that very little damage could be done to them by parties of forayers, even if they were captured by surprise. By a Scottish statute of 1535 it was enacted that every barmkin wall must be at least a yard thick, six yards high, and must enclose at least sixty square feet. The tower was built within this outer work. Another name for the peel was 'bastle-house,' Fr. *bastille*.

l. 267. *Moat-hill*. Scott supposed that the name of this round artificial mound near Hawick was derived from A.S. *mōt*, an assembly, and that the adjacent tribes may have met there in council.

l. 272. *Hazeldean* or *Hassendean* was tenanted by a family of Scotts, which Satchells describes as 'the ancientest house among them all.'

l. 282. *The Roman way*. 'An ancient Roman road, crossing through part of Roxburghshire.'—SCOTT.

l. 286. Deloraine prepared for an encounter, if necessary, with the outlaw, whose haunt he was approaching.

l. 287. *Minto-crags*. 'A romantic assemblage of cliffs, which rise suddenly above the vale of Teviot, in the immediate vicinity of the family-seat, from which Lord Minto takes his title. A small

platform, on a projecting crag, commanding a most beautiful prospect, is termed *Barnhill's Bed*. This Barnhill is said to have been a robber or outlaw. There are remains of a strong tower beneath the rocks, where he is supposed to have dwelt, and from which he derived his title.'—SCOTT.

l. 296. the warbling Doric reed. The allusion is to a pastoral song by Sir Gilbert Elliot, father of the first Lord Minto:—

'My sheep I neglected—I broke my sheep-hook,
And all the gay haunts of my youth I forsook:
No more for Amynta fresh garlands I wove,
Ambition, I said, would soon cure me of love;
But what had my youth with ambition to do!
Why left I Amynta! Why broke I my vow!'

l. 311. barded, 'or barbed—applied to a horse accoutred with defensive armour.'—SCOTT. Counter=chest. The next two lines must be literally true. The weight of a complete suit of armour was from 150 to 200 lbs. Moss-troopers generally were not so heavily encumbered. Scott, however, gives Deloraine four hours to ride the twenty miles between Hawick and Melrose.

Stanza xxx. See note on l. 58.

l. 334. Old Melrose. The Cistercian Abbey of Melrose was founded by David I. in 1136. The building often suffered in Border wars. It was plundered and burnt by Edward II. in his invasion of 1322. The building of which the ruins now remain was begun in 1326 by Robert the Bruce (whose heart was buried there), and completed in the reign of James IV. The Abbey was not allowed to stand long in its splendour. Before the date of the Harper's tale, Melrose and other religious houses in the south of Scotland were plundered and defaced by the armies of Henry VIII. Scott's residence, Abbotsford, is within a few miles of Melrose.

l. 337. curfew, O.Fr. *couvre-feu* = cover-fire. A bell was rung at a certain hour, eight o'clock, as a signal for all fires and lights to be extinguished. The curfew law was in force for a much shorter period than is commonly believed. It was introduced by William the Conqueror, and abolished by Henry I. in 1100. But the name is still given to the eight o'clock bell rung every evening in Scotch towns.

l. 338. lauds, 'the midnight service of the Catholic Church.'—SCOTT. Lat. *laudare*, to praise.

l. 341. that wild harp. The Aeolian harp, first met with in the seventeenth century, and so called from Aeolus, god of winds. See Grove's Dictionary of Music.

CANTO II.

It is said that Scott, when he wrote the famous advice of the first two lines, had not himself seen Melrose by moonlight. The idea that this was the best time for viewing the ruined abbey might have occurred to anybody, but *may* have been suggested by the following lines in Rogers's 'Pleasures of Memory':—

'As the stern grandeur of a Gothic tower
Awes us less deeply in its morning-hour,
Than when the shades of Time serenely fall
On every broken arch and ivied wall.'

Though Rogers meant to describe the mellowing effects of Time, the expression might well have suggested that old buildings are more impressive in moonlight than in the full light of day. Greenwich Hospital was the less romantic object of Rogers's reflections—

'Go, view the splendid domes of Greenwich,—go,
And own what raptures from reflection flow.'

1. 6. *oriel*. Scott seems to use the word loosely for a mullioned window, as in l. 113. An oriel or oriole was properly an oratory, Latin *oratoriolum*, or little place for prayer. 'Any projecting portion of a room or even of a building was called an oriole, such as a penthouse, or such as a closet, bower, or private chamber, an upper story, or a gallery; and the term became last of all applied to a projecting window, in which there was often an altar, and it was screened off to form an oratory, as in Linlithgow Palace, Scotland. This name is often erroneously given to the bay-window of a hall for the side-board, hence oriel-window, which we retain to the present day.' Parker, 'Glossary of Architecture.'

1. 11. *imagery*, a somewhat archaic use of the word for carved or painted figures, as in the 'graven image' of the Commandments. Cf. Chaucer's 'House of Fame,' iii. 100—'ymageries and tabernacles.' Also, 'The Squyr of Lowe Degre,' ll. 93-5:—

'In her oryall there she was
Closed well with royal glass.
Fulfylled it was with ymagery.'

1. 12. *scrolls*, &c. 'The buttresses ranged along the sides of the ruins of Melrose Abbey are, according to the Gothic style, richly carved and fretted, containing niches for the statues of saints, and labelled with scrolls, bearing appropriate texts of Scripture. Most of these statues have been demolished.'—SCOTT.

1. 16. St. David's pile. 'David I. of Scotland purchased the reputation of sanctity by founding, and liberally endowing, not only the monastery of Melrose, but those of Kelso, Jedburgh, and many others; which led to the well-known observation of his successor, that he was *a sore saint for the Crown*.'—SCOTT. The present pile, however, was not David's. See note, Canto I, l. 334.

1. 39. aventayle. Ducange derives the word from *avant*, and explains it to mean breast-plate. But the true derivation is from *ventus*, and it means the lower part of a helmet before the face which was raised to admit air, turning on hinges at the sides of the head.

Stanza V. The use of alliteration in the Monk's speech is worth remarking. It seems intended to heighten the contrast between the old man's scared and ghostly manner and the bluff abruptness of the moss-trooper.

1. 65. For mass or prayer, &c. 'The Borderers were, as may be supposed, very ignorant about religious matters. Colville, in his *Paranesis*, or *Admonition*, states that the reformed divines were so far from undertaking distant journeys to convert the heathen, "as I wold wis at God that ye wold only go bot to the Hielands and Borders of our own realm, to gain our awin countreymen, who, for lack of preaching and ministration of the sacraments, must, with tyme, becum either infidells, or atheists." But we learn from Lesley, that, however deficient in real religion, they regularly told their beads, and never with more zeal than when going on a plundering expedition.'—SCOTT.

1. 91. the unexpected dart. Scott quotes in illustration from Berners's Froissart, vol. ii. c. 44. 'By my fayth,' sayd the Duke of Lancaster, (to a Portuguese squire,) 'of all the feates of armes that the Castellyans, and they of your countrey doth use, the castynge of their dertes best pleaseth me, and gladly I wolde se it: for, as I hear say, if they strike one aryghte, without he be well armed, the dart will pierce him thrughe.'—'By my fayth, sir,' sayd the squyer, 'ye say trouth; for I have seen many a grete stroke given with them, which at one time cost us derely, and was to us great displeasure; for, at the said skyrmishe, Sir John Lawrence of Coygne was striken with a dart in such wise, that the head perced all the plates of his cote of mayle, and a jacke stopped with sylke, and passed thrughe his body, so that he fell down dead.' This mode of fighting with darts was imitated in the military game called *Jeugo de las canas*, which the Spaniards borrowed from their Moorish in-

vaders. A Saracen champion is thus described by Froissart, vol. ii. c. 71: 'Among the Sarazyns, there was a yonge knight called Agadinger Dolyferne; he was always wel mounted on a redy and a lyght horse; it seemed, when the horse ranne, that he did fly in the ayre. The knyghte seemed to be a good man of armes by his dedes; he bare always of usage three feathered dartes, and ryghte well he could handle them; and, according to their custome, he was clene armed, with a long white towell about his head. His apparell was blacke, and his own colour browne, and a good horseman. The Crysten men say, they thoughte he dyd such deeds of armes for the love of some yonge ladye of his country. And true it was, that he loved entirely the King of Thune's daughter, named Lady Azala; she was inherytor to the realme of Thune, after the discease of the kyng, her father. This Agadinger was sone to the Duke of Olyferne. I can nat telle if they were married together after or nat; but it was shewed me, that this knyght, for love of the sayd ladye, during the siege, did many feates of armes. The knyghtes of France wold fayne have taken hym; but they colde never attrape nor inclose him; his horse was so swyft and so redy to his hand, that alwaies he escaped.'

11. 98-9. ribbed aisle and quatre-feuille. The rhyme is not good, and it is dearly bought at the expense of architectural exactness. The carved bosses at the intersection of the ribs of a vaulted ceiling cannot fairly be called keystones. If they could be so called, it is not the 'aisles' that they lock. By quatre-feuille, the poet means the four-leaved flower which is so common an ornament in the Decorated style. I do not know any authority for this use of the word. *Quatrefoil* is applied to an opening pierced in four foils, much used in ornaments, but quite different from a four-leaved boss. A corbel is a projecting stone or piece of timber supporting a superincumbent weight, such as the shaft or small column which supports the ribs of a vault. They are carved and moulded in a great variety of ways, often, as in Melrose Abbey, in the form of heads and faces.

The following is Grose's description of the abbey, 'Antiquities of Scotland,' i. 129. It may be quoted as having been known to Scott. 'We entered at the south door, and no expression can convey an idea of the solemn magnificence which struck the eye. The roof of the north and south ends of the transepts remains, supported by intersecting groins, of the lightest order; the joinings ornamented with knots, some sculptured with figures, and others of pierced

work in flowers and foliage; the arching of the interstices constructed of thin stones, closely jointed; over the choir, part of the roof of like workmanship still remains. The side aisles are formed by light clustered pillars, richly capitalled, with garlands of flowers and foliage dispersed delicately in the mouldings; in some the figures of animals are interspersed.'

l. 109. Chief of Otterburne. 'The famous and desperate battle of Otterburne was fought 15th August, 1388, betwixt Henry Percy, called Hotspur, and James, Earl of Douglas. Both these renowned champions were at the head of a chosen body of troops, and they were rivals in military fame; so that Froissart affirms, "Of all the battayles and encounteryngs that I have made mencion of here before in all this hystory, great or smalle, this battayle that I treat of nowe was one of the sorest and best foughten, without cowardes or faynte hertes: for there was neyther knyghte nor squyer but that dyde his devoyre, and foughte hande to hande. This batayle was lyke the batayle of Becherell, the which was valiauntly fought and endured." The issue of the conflict is well known: Percy was made prisoner, and the Scots won the day, dearly purchased by the death of their gallant general, the Earl of Douglas, who was slain in the action. He was buried at Melrose beneath the high altar. "His obsequye was done reverently, and on his bodye layde a tombe of stone, and his baner hangyng over hym."—*Froissart*, vol. ii. p. 165.'—SCOTT.

l. 110. Knight of Liddesdale. 'William Douglas, called the Knight of Liddesdale, flourished during the reign of David II., and was so distinguished by his valour that he was called the Flower of Chivalry. Nevertheless, he tarnished his renown by the cruel murder of Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie, originally his friend and brother in arms. The King had conferred upon Ramsay the sheriffdom of Teviotdale, to which Douglas pretended some claim. In revenge of this preference, the Knight of Liddesdale came down upon Ramsay, while he was administering justice at Hawick, seized and carried him off to his remote and inaccessible castle of Hermitage, where he threw his unfortunate prisoner, horse and man, into a dungeon, and left him to perish of hunger. It is said, the miserable captive prolonged his existence for several days by the corn which fell from a granary above the vault in which he was confined. So weak was the royal authority, that David, although highly incensed at this atrocious murder, found himself obliged to appoint the Knight of Liddesdale successor to his victim, as Sheriff

of Teviotdale. But he was soon after slain, while hunting in Ettrick Forest, by his own godson and chieftain, William, Earl of Douglas, in revenge, according to some authors, of Ramsay's murder; although a popular tradition, preserved in a ballad quoted by Godscroft, and some parts of which are still preserved, ascribes the resentment of the Earl to jealousy. The place where the Knight of Liddesdale was killed is called, from his name, William-Cross, upon the ridge of a hill called William-hope, betwixt Tweed and Yarrow. His body, according to Godscroft, was carried to Lindean church the first night after his death, and thence to Melrose, where he was interred with great pomp, and where his tomb is still shown.'—SCOTT.

l. 113. the east oriel. See note on l. 6. 'It is impossible to conceive a more beautiful specimen of the lightness and elegance of Gothic architecture, when in its purity, than the eastern window of Melrose Abbey. Sir James Hall of Dunglas, Bart., has, with great ingenuity and plausibility, traced the Gothic order through its various forms and seemingly eccentric ornaments, to an architectural imitation of wicker-work; of which, as we learn from some of the legends, the earliest Christian churches were constructed. In such an edifice, the original of the clustered pillars is traced to a set of round posts, begirt with slender rods of willow, whose loose summits were brought to meet from all quarters, and bound together artificially, so as to produce the frame-work of the roof: and the tracery of our Gothic windows is displayed in the meeting and interlacing of rods and hoops, affording an inexhaustible variety of beautiful forms of open work. This ingenious system is alluded to in the romance. Sir James Hall's Essay on Gothic Architecture is published in *The Edinburgh Philosophical Transactions*.'—SCOTT.

l. 130. A Scottish monarch. 'It is said Alexander II., King of Scotland, lies buried at the high altar, and that an inscription denoted his tomb. But no such inscription is now to be found. There is a marble tomb, the form of a coffin, on the south side of the high altar, but it bears no inscription, and is supposed to be that of Waldevus, or Walter, the second abbot, who was canonised,'—Grose's 'Antiquities of Scotland,' i. 129.

l. 138. Michael Scott. 'Sir Michael Scott of Balwearie flourished during the thirteenth century, and was one of the ambassadors sent to bring the Maid of Norway to Scotland upon the death of Alexander III. By a poetical anachronism, he is here placed in a later era. He was a man of much learning, chiefly acquired in foreign countries. He wrote a commentary upon

Aristotle, printed at Venice in 1496: and several treatises upon natural philosophy, from which he appears to have been addicted to the abstruse studies of judicial astrology, alchymy, physiognomy, and chiromancy. Hence he passed among his contemporaries for a skilful magician. Dempster informs us, that he remembers to have heard in his youth, that the magic books of Michael Scott were still in existence, but could not be opened without danger, on account of the malignant fiends who were thereby invoked.—*Dempsteri Historia Ecclesiastica*, 1627, lib. xii. p. 495. Lesly characterises Michael Scott as “*singulariter philosophiae, astronomiae, ac medicinae laude prestans; dicebatur penitissimos magiae recessus indagasse.*” Dante also mentions him as a renowned wizard:—

“Quell altro che ne’ fianchi è così poco.

Michele Scotto fu, che veramente

Delle magiche frodè seppè il giuoco.”

Inferno, Canto xxmo.

‘A personage, thus spoken of by biographers and historians, loses little of his mystical fame in vulgar tradition. Accordingly, the memory of Sir Michael Scott survives in many a legend; and in the south of Scotland, any work of great labour and antiquity is ascribed either to the agency of *Auld Michael*, of Sir William Wallace, or of the devil. Tradition varies concerning the place of his burial; some contend for Home Coltrame, in Cumberland; others for Melrose Abbey. But all agree, that his books of magic were interred in his grave, or preserved in the convent where he died.’—SCOTT. Michael Scott is also mentioned honourably by Roger Bacon, *Opus Majus*, pp. 36, 37. The tradition about his wonderful book of spells is used by Leyden in his ballad of Lord Soulis, ‘Border Minstrelsy.’ The book is there put in possession of Thomas of Ercildoun.

‘The black spae-book from his breast he took,

Impressed with many a warlock spell;

And the book it was wrote by Michael Scott,

Who held in awe the fiends of hell.

They buried it deep, where his bones they sleep,

That mortal man might never it see;

But Thomas did save it from the grave,

When he returned from Faerie.’

l. 140. *Salamanca’s cave*. ‘Spain, from the relics, doubtless, of Arabian learning and superstition, was accounted a favourite residence of magicians. Pope Sylvester, who actually imported from

Spain the use of the Arabian numerals, was supposed to have learned there the magic, for which he was stigmatized by the ignorance of his age.—*William of Malmsbury*, lib. ii. cap. 10. There were public schools, where magic, or rather the sciences supposed to involve its mysteries, were regularly taught, at Toledo, Seville, and Salamanca. In the latter city they were held in a deep cavern, the mouth of which was walled up by Queen Isabella, wife of King Ferdinand.—*D'Auton on Learned Incredulity*, p. 45. These Spanish schools of magic are celebrated also by the Italian poets of romance.—SCOTT, who adds a note about an enchanted cave in the history of Roderick, the last of the Goths, afterwards made by him the subject of a poem.

1. 142. The bells would ring. “*Tantamne rem tam negliger*?” says Tyrwhitt, of his predecessor, Speight; who, in his commentary on Chaucer, had omitted, as trivial and fabulous, the story of Wade and his boat Guingelot, to the great prejudice of posterity, the memory of the hero and the boat being now entirely lost. That future antiquaries may lay no such omission to my charge, I have noted one or two of the most current traditions concerning Michael Scott. He was chosen, it is said, to go upon an embassy, to obtain from the King of France satisfaction for certain piracies committed by his subjects upon those of Scotland. Instead of preparing a new equipage and splendid retinue, the ambassador retreated to his study, opened his book, and evoked a fiend in the shape of a huge black horse, mounted upon his back, and forced him to fly through the air towards France. As they crossed the sea, the devil insidiously asked his rider, What it was that the old women of Scotland muttered at bed-time? A less experienced wizard might have answered that it was the Pater Noster, which would have licensed the devil to precipitate him from his back. But Michael sternly replied, “What is that to thee?—Mount, Diabolus, and fly!” When he arrived at Paris, he tied his horse to the gate of the palace, entered, and boldly delivered his message. An ambassador, with so little of the pomp and circumstance of diplomacy, was not received with much respect, and the King was about to return a contemptuous refusal to his demand, when Michael besought him to suspend his resolution till he had seen his horse stamp three times. The first stamp shook every steeple in Paris, and caused all the bells to ring; the second threw down three of the towers of the palace; and the infernal steed had lifted his hoof to give the third stamp, when the King rather chose to dismiss

Michael, with the most ample concessions, than to stand to the probable consequences. Another time, it is said that, when residing at the Tower of Oakwood, upon the Ettrick, about three miles above Selkirk, he heard of the fame of a sorceress, called the Witch of Falsehope, who lives on the opposite side of the river. Michael went one morning to put her skill to the test, but was disappointed by her denying positively any knowledge of the necromantic art. In his discourse with her, he laid his wand inadvertently on the table, which the hag observing, suddenly snatched it up, and struck him with it. Feeling the force of the charm, he rushed out of the house; but, as it had conferred on him the external appearance of a hare, his servant, who waited without, halloo'd upon the discomfited wizard his own greyhounds, and pursued him so close, that, in order to obtain a moment's breathing to reverse the charm, Michael, after a very fatiguing course, was fain to take refuge in his own *farwhole* (*Anglice*, common sewer). In order to revenge himself of the witch of Falsehope, Michael, one morning in the ensuing harvest, went to the hill above the house with his dogs, and sent down his servant to ask a bit of bread from the goodwife for his greyhounds, with instructions what to do if he met with a denial. Accordingly, when the witch had refused the boon with contumely, the servant, as his master had directed, laid above the door a paper which he had given him, containing, amongst many cabalistical words, the well-known rhyme,—

“Maister Michael Scott's man
Sought meat, and gat nane.”

‘Immediately the good old woman, instead of pursuing her domestic occupation, which was baking bread for the reapers, began to dance round the fire, repeating the rhyme, and continued this exercise till her husband sent the reapers to the house, one after another, to see what had delayed their provision; but the charm caught each as they entered, and, losing all idea of returning, they joined in the dance and chorus. At length the old man himself went to the house; but as his wife's frolic with Mr. Michael, whom he had seen on the hill, made him a little cautious, he contented himself with looking in at the window, and saw the reapers at their involuntary exercise, dragging his wife, now completely exhausted, sometimes round, and sometimes through, the fire, which was, as usual, in the midst of the house. Instead of entering, he saddled a horse, and rode up the hill, to humble himself before Michael, and beg a cessation of the spell; which the good-natured warlock immediately

granted, directing him to enter the house backwards, and, with his left hand, take the spell from above the door; which accordingly ended the supernatural dance.—This tale was told less particularly in former editions, and I have been censured for inaccuracy in doing so.—A similar charm occurs in *Huon de Bourdeaux*, and in the ingenious Oriental tale, called the *Caliph Vathek*.

‘Notwithstanding his victory over the witch of Falsehope, Michael Scott, like his predecessor, Merlin, fell at last a victim to female art. His wife, or concubine, elicited from him the secret, that his art could ward off any danger except the poisonous qualities of broth made of the flesh of a *breme* sow. Such a mess she accordingly administered to the wizard, who died in consequence of eating it; surviving, however, long enough to put to death his treacherous confidante.’—SCOTT.

1. 145. Eildon hills, near Melrose. ‘Michael Scott was, once upon a time, much embarrassed by a spirit, for whom he was under the necessity of finding constant employment. He commanded him to build a *cauld*, or dam-head, across the Tweed at Kelso; it was accomplished in one night, and still does honour to the infernal architect. Michael next ordered, that Eildon hill, which was then a uniform cone, should be divided into three. Another night was sufficient to part its summit into the three picturesque peaks which it now bears. At length the enchanter conquered this indefatigable demon, by employing him in the hopeless and endless task of making ropes out of sea-sand.’—SCOTT.

1. 186. unquenchable lamp. Scott, in a note on ‘eternal lamps,’ a favourite subject with writers on natural magic, quotes the story about the magician Virgil’s unfortunate attempt to renew his life. See Thoms’ ‘Early English Prose Romances,’ vol. ii. *Virgilius*.

1. 242. Deloraine, in terror. ‘William of Deloraine might be strengthened in this belief by the well-known story of the Cid Ruy Diaz. When the body of that famous Christian champion was sitting in state by the high altar of the cathedral church of Toledo, where it remained for ten years, a certain malicious Jew attempted to pull him by the beard; but he had no sooner touched the formidable whiskers, than the corpse started up, and half unsheathed his sword. The Israelite fled; and so permanent was the effect of his terror, that he became Christian.—*Heywood’s Hierarchy*, p. 480, quoted from *Sebastian Cobarruvias Croeze*.’—SCOTT.

1. 353. The Baron’s dwarf. See Editor’s Introduction. ‘The idea of Lord Cranstoun’s Goblin Page is taken from a being called

Gilpin Horner, who appeared, and made some stay, at a farm-house among the Border-mountains. A gentleman of that country has noted down the following particulars concerning his appearance:—

“The only certain, at least most probable account, that ever I heard of Gilpin Horner, was from an old man, of the name of Anderson, who was born, and lived all his life at Todshaw-hill, in Eskedale-muir, the place where Gilpin appeared and staid for some time. He said there were two men, late in the evening, when it was growing dark, employed in fastening the horses upon the uttermost part of their ground, (that is, tying their forefeet together, to hinder them from travelling far in the night,) when they heard a voice, at some distance, crying, ‘*Tint! Tint! Tint!*’ (*lost*). One of the men, named Moffat, called out, ‘What deil has tint you? Come here.’ Immediately a creature, of something like a human form, appeared. It was surprisingly little, distorted in features, and misshapen in limbs. As soon as the two men could see it plainly, they ran home in a great fright, imagining they had met with some goblin. By the way, Moffat fell, and it ran over him, and was home at the house as soon as either of them, and staid there a long time; but I cannot say how long. It was real flesh and blood, and ate and drank, was fond of cream, and, when it could get at it, would destroy a great deal. It seemed a mischievous creature; and any of the children whom it could master, it would beat and scratch without mercy. It was once abusing a child belonging to the same Moffat, who had been so frightened by its first appearance; and he, in a passion, struck it so violent a blow upon the side of the head, that it tumbled upon the ground; but it was not stunned; for it set up its head directly, and exclaimed, ‘Ah, hah, Will o’ Moffat, you strike sair!’ (*viz. sore.*) After it had staid there long, one evening, when the women were milking the cows in the loan, it was playing among the children near by them, when suddenly they heard a loud shrill voice cry, three times, ‘*Gilpin Horner!*’ It started, and said, ‘*That is me, I must away,*’ and instantly disappeared, and was never heard of more. Old Anderson did not remember it, but said he had often heard his father, and other old men in the place, who were there at the time, speak about it; and in my younger years I have often heard it mentioned, and never met with any who had the remotest doubt as to the truth of the story; although, I must own, I cannot help thinking there must be some misrepresentation in it.”—To this account, I have to add the following particulars from the most respectable authority. Besides constantly repeating the word *tint!*

tint! Gilpin Horner was often heard to call upon Peter Bertram, or Be-te-ram, as he pronounced the word; and when the shrill voice called Gilpin Horner, he immediately acknowledged it was the summons of the said Peter Bertram; who seems therefore to have been the devil who had tint, or lost, the little imp. As much has been objected to Gilpin Horner, on account of his being supposed rather a device of the author than a popular superstition, I can only say, that no legend which I ever heard seemed to be more universally credited; and that many persons of very good rank, and considerable information, are well known to repose absolute faith in the tradition.—SCOTT.

l. 360. 'Lost! lost! lost!' 'What or who was lost?' has been asked by many readers and even critics of the poem, who have not read Scott's explanation. The answer is that it was the goblin himself that was lost, or strayed from his supernatural master, the wizard Michael Scott.

l. 386. *Mary's Chapel* of the Lowes stands near St. Mary's Loch, out of which the Yarrow flows. The incident described in St. xxxiii is historical, except of course the part played by the goblin page. Scott quotes from legal records the particulars of the prosecution of Dame Janet Beaton, Lady Buccleuch, and a great number of the name of Scott, for an attack made on St. Mary's Kirk, in pursuit of Sir Peter, the Laird of Cranstoun. It appears that Robert Scott, the priest of St. Mary's, was implicated. Two hundred persons 'with jacks, helmets, and other weapons'—Scott makes it 'three hundred spears and three'—were assembled. They broke open the doors of the kirk. No motive is assigned but 'ancient feud.' The Scotts were bound over, jointly and severally, to keep the peace towards Sir Peter Cranstoun in future. Scott makes Sir Peter Lord Cranstoun for poetic ornament. The date of the outrage was 1557.

l. 398. *massy stone*. Stones and iron bars, hurled from the battlements, were the principal means of defence against a direct assault. In drawings of attacks on mediæval castles, men-at-arms are often introduced sprawling under a shower of such missiles.

l. 415. *Tynedale men*. See note on St. v, Canto I. The Earl of Northumberland in his invasion tried to impress such an idea on the Scotts.

CANTO III.

Sir William of Deloraine and his steed, after riding for forty miles in complete armour, make a very good fight. It was natural that the steed should 'stumble in the mortal shock.' The simplicity and verisimilitude of Scott's description of the combat may be compared with the powerful but more forced and fantastic style of Lord Tennyson's description of such encounters. For example, take the combat between Gareth and the Morning Star:—

'All at fiery speed the two
Shock'd on the central bridge, and either spear
Bent but not brake, and either knight at once,
Hurl'd as a stone from out of a catapult,
Beyond his horse's crupper and the bridge,
Fell, as if dead; but quickly rose and drew,' &c.

Scott follows rather the simplicity of the old romancers. For example, Malory's 'Morte d'Arthur,' Book ix. c. 34. 'Then Sir Launcelot cried, The Knight with the black shield, make thee ready to just with me. When Sir Tristram heard him say so, he gat his spear in his hand, and either abashed down their heads, and came together as thunder, and Sir Tristram's spear brake in pieces, and Sir Launcelot by mal-fortune struck Sir Tristram on the side a deep wound nigh to the death. But yet Sir Tristram avoided not his saddle, and so the spear brake.' Coming together like thunder is a very common simile in romance.

1. 33. the Baron's crest, 'in allusion to the name Cranstoun, is a crane dormant, holding a stone in his foot, with an emphatic Border motto, *Thou shalt want ere I want.*'—SCOTT.

1. 61. Shield, and jack, and acton. Scott is somewhat indefinite in his description of the Border Knight's armour. The exact meaning of such a word as 'jack' is very difficult to ascertain, probably because the name was applied to considerably different pieces of armour. Ritson describes a jack as 'a jacket, or short coat, plated or institched with small pieces of iron, and usually worn by the peasantry of the Border in the journeys from place to place, as well as in the occasional skirmishes with the moss-troopers, who are most probably equipped with the same sort of harness.' But it was not every peasant that had so serviceable a defence. In the ballad 'Dick o' the Cow,' Johnnie Armstrong borrows 'the laird's jack,' which is described as a 'steel jack,' and afterwards becomes the prey of the

lucky Dick. The jack so called was generally not plated or mailed: it was a thickly padded garment worn sometimes under plate or mail armour, sometimes without armour, its buckskin being considered sufficient protection for men-at-arms, though not for knights. Louis XI. adopted leathern jackets for his archers. Richly ornamented jacks were sometimes worn for show not for use in the field. The acton, aketon, or haqueton, made of buckram, was almost always worn under armour.

l. 90. book-bosom'd priest. "At Unthank, two miles N.E. from the church (of Ewes), there are the ruins of a chapel for divine service, in time of Popery. There is a tradition, that friars were wont to come from Melrose or Jedburgh, to baptise and marry in this parish; and from being in use to carry the mass-book in their bosoms, they were called by the inhabitants, *Book-a-bosomes*. There is a man yet alive, who knew old men who had been baptised by these Book-a-bosomes, and who says one of them, called Hair, used this parish for a very long time."—*Account of Parish of Ewes, apud Macfarlane's MSS.*—SCOTT.

l. 103. 'Glamour, in the legends of Scottish superstition, means the magic power of imposing on the eyesight of the spectators, so that the appearance of an object shall be totally different from the reality. The transformation of Michael Scott by the witch of Falsehope, already mentioned, was a genuine operation of glamour. To a similar charm the ballad of Johnny Fa' imputes the fascination of the lovely Countess, who eloped with that gipsy leader:—

"Sae soon as they saw her weel-far'd face,

They cast the *glamour* o'er her."—SCOTT.

Belief in the power of producing illusions is not, of course, peculiar to Scottish superstition, and Scott quotes other examples of such enchantment from Froissart. The most ordinary magician was believed to have this power, and romance is full of cases of the exercise of it. The story of Aurelius in Chaucer's 'Franklin's Tale' is a familiar example. Aurelius, in his distress, bethinks him of a book of 'magic natural,' which he saw lying in the study of a fellow-student at Orleans:—

'As yonge clerkes, that ben likerous

To reden artes that ben curious,

Seken in every halke and every herne

Particular sciences for to lerne'—

and resolves to get this young clerk to help him in his love-making by producing illusions. 'For,' he says to himself—

‘For I am siker that ther ben sciences
 By which men maken dyverse apparences,
 Which as the subtil tregetoures playen.
 For ofte at festes have I herd seyen,
 That tregetoures, withinne an halle large,
 Had made in come water and a barge,
 And in the halle rowen up and down.
 Som tyme hath semed come a grym leoun;
 Som tyme a castel al of lym and ston,
 And when hem liked, voyded it anon.’

Franklin's Tale, ll. 411-420.

It was a spell of exactly the same kind that the goblin page learned from Michael Scott's mighty book, and made such liberal use of at Branksome.

l. 108. *a sheeling* = a shepherd's hut, 'spelt shieling in Campbell's O'Connor's Child, st. 3.' See Skeat under *sheal*.

l. 124. *who gave the stroke*. Scott quotes from an amusing letter by Dr. Henry More, prefixed to Glanville's 'Saducismus Triumphatus,' showing that the superstition had not died out among educated men in the seventeenth century.

l. 140. *Gramarye*, magic. This mysterious-looking word is merely a form of 'grammar,' Fr. *grammaire*, and points to a time when all book-learning was viewed with suspicion.

l. 155. *dissolved the spell*. 'It is a firm article of popular faith, that no enchantment can subsist in a living stream. Nay, if you can interpose a brook betwixt you and witches, spectres, or even fiends, you are in perfect safety. Burns's inimitable *Tam o' Shanter* turns entirely upon such a circumstance. The belief seems to be of antiquity. Brompton informs us that certain Irish wizards could, by spells, convert earthen clods or stones into fat pigs, which they sold in the market, but which always reassumed their proper form when driven by the deceived purchaser across a running stream. But Brompton is severe on the Irish for a very good reason. "Gens ista spurcissima non solvunt decimas."—*Chronicon Johannis Brompton apud decem Scriptores*, p. 1076.'—SCOTT.

l. 157. *vilde*, a corruption of vile, often used by Spenser as an archaism, and common in the Elizabethan drama. 'But 'tis too vild a question.'—'A Fair Quarrel,' ii. r. 34.

l. 206. *ban-dog*. Scott here calls the bloodhound a ban-dog, but at l. 404 he speaks of bloodhounds and bandogs, as if they were different sorts.

1. 216. *barret-cap*. Same word as *berretta*, a small square cap without a brim.

1. 221. *kirtle*, a tunic, used also for a woman's dress.

1. 228. *below the knee*. Imitated from Drayton's account of Robin Hood and his followers:—

'A hundred valiant men had this brave Robin Hood,
Still ready at his call, that bowmen were right good,
All clad in Lincoln green, with caps of red and blue,
His fellow's winded horn not one of them but knew.
When setting to their lips their bugles shrill,
The warbling echoes waked from every dale and hill;
Their bauldries set with studs athwart their shoulders cast,
To which under their arms their sheafs were buckled fast,
A short sword at their belt, a buckler scarce a span,
Who struck below the knee not counted then a man.
All made of Spanish yew, their bows were wondrous strong,
They not an arrow drew, but was a cloth-yard long.
Of archery they had the very perfect craft,
With broad arrow, or but, or prick, or roving shaft.'

Polyolbion, Song 26.

Scott refers also to the rule in jousting that it was unfair to wound an antagonist in the thigh or leg, i.e. to strike below the trunk with the spear. But this is a somewhat different point of honour. Scott quotes from Froissart accounts of two duels in which by accident or design this law of arms was broken, much to the indignation of the gentlemen looking on. See Berners's Froissart, vol. i. ch. 366, and ch. 373. Scott accidentally makes the offender Cator a Frenchman, and Michael, his victim, an English squire. Cator was the Englishman and Michael the Frenchman.

1. 291. *with a charm* she stanch'd the blood. 'See several charms for this purpose in Reginald Scott's *Discovery of Witchcraft*, p. 273.'—SCOTT.

1. 296. *salved the splinter*. Scott makes the Ladye follow the famous treatment of Sir Kenelm Digby, which was to do nothing to the wound except cleanse it, bind it up, and keep it neither too hot nor too cold, while he applied his medicaments to the weapon that had caused the wound. This weapon was carefully dressed at intervals, and treated with a sympathetic powder or 'ointment of honour.' Sir Kenelm effected many striking cures in this way, and, Scott says, delivered a lecture at Montpellier on the subject, which was translated into English by R. White in 1658. 'I presume,' Scott adds, 'that

the success ascribed to the sympathetic mode of treatment might arise from the pains bestowed in washing the wound and excluding the air, thus bringing on a cure by the first intention.' His quotation from Dryden's 'Enchanted Island' (v. 4) is very apposite. Miranda enters with Hippolito's sword wrapt up:—

Hip. O my wound pains me!

Mir. I am come to ease you. [*She unwraps the Sword.*]

Hip. Alas, I feel the cold air come to me;

My wound shoots worse than ever.

Mir. Does it still grieve you?

[*She wipes and anoints the Sword.*]

Hip. Now, methinks, there's something laid just upon it.

Mir. Do you find no ease?

Hip. Yes, yes; upon the sudden all this pain

Is leaving me. Sweet heaven, how I am eased!

1. 305. the evening fell. Compare with this description of evening Byron's 'Don Juan,' Canto III. 102-108, 'Ave Maria, blessed be the hour!' &c.

1. 341. The Seneschal, or High Steward, was the chief official of a castle or barony, the representative of his lord in all respects, empowered to punish offences, determine controversies, and direct and record all proceedings in the Courts of the Manor.

1. 345. a bale of fire. '*Bale*, beacon-fagot. The Border beacons, from their number and position, formed a sort of telegraphic communication with Edinburgh.—The Act of Parliament 1455, c. 48, directs, that one bale or fagot shall be warning of the approach of the English in any manner; two bales, that they are *coming indeed*; four bales, blazing beside each other, that the enemy are in great force. "The same taikenings to be watched and maid at Eggerhoppe (Eggerstand) Castell, fra they se the fire of Hume, that they fire right swa. And in like manner on Sowtra Edge, sall se the fire of Eggerhope Castell, and mak taikening in like manner: And then may all Louthaine be warned, and in special the Castell of Edinburgh; and their four fires to be made in like manner, that they in Fife, and fra Striveling east, and the east part of Louthaine, and to Dunbar, all may se them, and come to the defence of the realme." These beacons (at least in latter times) were a "long and strong tree set up, with a long iron pole across the head of it, and an iron brander fixed on a stalk in the middle of it, for holding a tar-barrel."—*Stevenson's History*, vol. i. p. 701.—SCOTT. See also Veitch's *Border History*, p. 273.

l. 349. mount for Branksome was the gathering word of the Scotts. See 'Jamie Telfer,' Border Minstrelsy, where there is a similar hurried gathering of the clan.

'Warn Wat o' Harden, and his sons,
Wi' them will Borthwick water ride;
Warn Goldilands, and Allanhaugh,
And Gilmans-cleuch, and Commonsides.

Ride by the gates o' Priestthaughsware,
And warn the Currors o' the Lea;
As ye come doun the Hermitage Slack,
Warn doughty Willie o' Gorrinberry.

The Scotts they rade, the Scotts they ran,
Sae starkly and sae steadilie!

And aye the ower-word o' the thrang
Was "Rise for Branksome readilie!"

l. 358. Our kin, and clan, and friends, to raise. 'The speed with which the Borderers collected great bodies of horse, may be judged of from the following extract, when the subject of the rising was much less important than that supposed in the romance. It is taken from Carey's *Memoirs*:—

"Upon the death of the old Lord Scoop, the Queen gave the west wardenry to his son, that had married my sister. He having received that office, came to me with great earnestness, and desired me to be his deputy, offering me that I should live with him in his house: that he would allow me half a dozen men, and as many horses, to be kept at his charge; and his fee being 1000 merks yearly, he would part it with me, and I should have the half. This his noble offer I accepted of, and went with him to Carlisle; where I was no sooner come, but I entered into my office. We had a stirring time of it; and few days passed over my head but I was on horseback, either to prevent mischief, or take malefactors, and to bring the Border in better quiet than it had been in times past. One memorable thing of God's mercy shewed unto me, was such as I have good cause still to remember it.

"I had private intelligence given me, that there were two Scottish-men that had killed a churchman in Scotland, and were by one of the Græmes relieved. This Græme dwelt within five miles of Carlisle. He had a pretty house, and close by it a strong tower, for his own defence in time of need.—About two o'clock in the morning, I took horse in Carlisle, and not above twenty-five in my

company, thinking to surprise the house on a sudden. Before I could surround the house, the two Scots were gotten in the strong tower, and I could see a boy riding from the house as fast as his horse could carry him; I little suspecting what it meant. But Thomas Carleton came to me presently, and told me, that if I did not presently prevent it, both myself and all my company would be either slain or taken prisoners. It was strange to me to hear this language. He then said to me, 'Do you see that boy that rideth away so fast? He will be in Scotland within this half hour; and he is gone to let them know that you are here, and to what end you are come, and the small number you have with you; and that if they will make haste, on a sudden they may surprise us, and do with us what they please.' Hereupon we took advice what was best to be done. We sent notice presently to all parts to raise the country, and to come to us with all the speed they could; and withall we sent to Carlisle to raise the townsmen; for without foot we could do no good against the tower. There we staid some hours, expecting more company; and within short time after the country came in on all sides, so that we were quickly between three and four hundred horse; and, after some longer stay, the foot of Carlisle came to us, to the number of three or four hundred men; whom we presently set to work, to get to the top of the tower, and to uncover the roof; and then some twenty of them to fall down together, and by that means to win the tower.—The Scots seeing their present danger, offered to parley, and yielded themselves to my mercy. They had no sooner opened the iron gate, and yielded themselves my prisoners, but we might see four hundred horse within a quarter of a mile coming to their rescue, and to surprise me and my small company; but of a sudden they stayed, and stood at gaze. Then had I more to do than ever; for all our Borderers came crying, with full mouths, 'Sir, give us leave to set upon them; for these are they that have killed our fathers, our brothers, and uncles, and our cousins; and they are coming, thinking to surprise you, upon weak grass nags, such as they could get on a sudden; and God hath put them into your hands, that we may take revenge of them for much blood that they have spilt of ours.' I desired they would be patient a while, and bethought myself, if I should give them their will, there would be few or none of the Scots that would escape unkilld; (there was so many deadly feuds among them;) and therefore I resolved with myself to give them a fair answer, but not to give them their desire. So I told them, that if I were not there myself, they might then do

what they pleased themselves; but being present, if I should give them leave, the blood that should be spilt that day would lie very hard upon my conscience. And therefore I desired them, for my sake, to forbear; and, if the Scots did not presently make away with all the speed they could, upon my sending to them, they should then have their wills to do what they pleased. They were ill satisfied with my answer, but durst not disobey. I sent with speed to the Scots, and bade them pack away with all the speed they could; for if they stayed the messenger's return, they should few of them return to their own home. They made no stay; but they were returned homewards before the messenger had made an end of his message. Thus, by God's mercy, I escaped a great danger; and, by my means, there were a great many men's lives saved that day."—SCOTT.

11. 385-8. *tarn*, a mountain lake. *Earn*, a Scottish eagle. *Cairn*, 'the cairns, or piles of loose stones, which crown the summit of most of our Scottish hills, and are found in other remarkable situations, seem usually, though not universally, to have been sepulchral monuments. Six flat stones are commonly found in the centre, forming a cavity of greater or smaller dimensions, in which an urn is often placed. The author is possessed of one, discovered beneath an immense cairn at Roughlee, in Liddesdale. It is of the most barbarous construction; the middle of the substance alone having been subjected to the fire, over which, when hardened, the artist had laid an inner and outer coat of unbaked clay, etched with some very rude ornaments; his skill apparently being inadequate to baking the vase, when completely finished. The contents were bones and ashes, and a quantity of beads made of coal. This seems to have been a barbarous imitation of the Roman fashion of sepulture.'—SCOTT.

CANTO IV.

The first two stanzas may serve as a reminder of the change that Scott introduced upon the reflective poetry of the eighteenth century. The Minstrel's strain of reflection is an echo of Rogers's 'Pleasures of Memory,' whose elegant musings on the past had some share in forming Scott's historic sentiment. But the reflections of Rogers are abstract, detached from individual human interest, common to humanity. Here, on the other hand, we have not merely reflections

in general on the changes that time brings, but personal emotion, the touching retrospect of an individual man, with joys and griefs of his own to remember, awakened as in real life by casual incidents. This exhibition of warm personal emotion, set in a moving stream of life, was one of the novelties of the Lay, and one of the main secrets of its effect.

l. 20. **great Dundee.** Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount of Dundee. The reference is to the battle of Killiecrankie, July 27, 1689.

l. 28. **pathless marsh, and mountain cell.** 'The morasses were the usual refuge of the Border herdsmen, on the approach of an English army. Caves, hewed in the most dangerous and inaccessible places, also afforded an occasional retreat. Such caverns may be seen in the precipitous banks of the Teviot at Sunlaws, upon the Ale at Ancram, upon the Jed at Hundalee, and in many other places upon the Border. The banks of the Eske, at Gorton and Hawthornden, are hollowed into similar recesses. But even these dreary dens were not always secure places of concealment. "In the way as we came, not far from this place (Long Niddry), George Ferres, a gentleman of my Lord Protector's . . . happened upon a cave in the ground, the mouth whereof was so worne with the fresh printe of steps, that he seemed to be certayne thear wear some folke within; and gone doune to trie, he was readily receyved with a hakebut or two. He left them not yet, till he had known wheyther thei wolde be content to yield and come out; which they fondly refusing, he went to my lord's grace, and upon utterance of the thyng, gat licence to deale with them as he coule; and so returned to them, with a skore or two of pioners. Three ventes had their cave, that we wear ware of, whereof he first stopt up on; anoother he fill'd full of strawe, and set it a fyre, whereat they within cast water apace; but it was so wel maynteyned without, that the fyre prevayled, and thei within fayn to get them belyke into anoother parler. Then devysed we (for I hapt to be with him) to stop the same up, whereby we should eyther smooother them, or fynd out their ventes, if thei hadde any moe; as this was done at another issue, about xii score of, we moughte see the fume of their smoke to come out: the which continued with so great a force, and so long a while, that we could not but thinke they must needs get them out, or smooother within: and forasmuch as we found not that they dyd the tone, we thought it for certain thei wear sure of the toother."—*Patten's Account of Somerset's Expedition into Scotland*, apud *Dalyell's Fragments*.—SCOTT.

l. 37. **southern ravage.** 'From the following fragment of a

letter from the Earl of Northumberland to King Henry VIII., preserved among the Cotton MSS. Calig. B. vii. 179, the reader may estimate the nature of the dreadful war which was occasionally waged upon the Borders, sharpened by mutual cruelties, and the personal hatred of the wardens, or leaders.

'Some Scottish Barons, says the Earl, had threatened to come within "three miles of my pore house of Werkworth, where I lye, and gif me light to put on my clothes at mydnight; and alsoo the said Marke Carr said there opynly, that, seying they had a governor on the Marches of Scotland, as well as they had in Ingland, he shulde kepe your highness instructions, gyffyn unto your garyson, for making of any day-forrey; for he and his friends wolde burne enough on the nyght, lettynge your counsaill here desyne a notable acte at theyre pleasures.' Upon whiche, in your highnes name, I comaundet dewe watche to be kepte on your Marchies, for comyng in of any Scotts.—Neuertheless, upon Thursday at night last, came thyrty light horsemen into a litil village of myne, called Whitell, having not past sex houses, lying towards Ryddisdaill, upon Shilbotell More, and there wold have fyred the said howses, but ther was no fyre to get there, and they forgate to brynge any withe theyme; and took a wyf being great with chylde, in the said towne, and said to hyr, Wher we can not gyve the lard lyght, yet we shall doo this in spyte of hym; and gyve her iii mortall wounds upon the heid, and another in the right side, with a dagger: whereupon the said wyf is deede, and the childe in her bely is loste. Beseeching your most gracious highness to reduce unto your gracious memory this wylful and shamefull murder, done within this your highnes realme, notwithstanding all the inhabitants thereabout rose unto the said fray, and gave warnynge by becons into the cuntry afore theyme, and yet the Scottsmen dyd escape. And upon certeyne knowledge to my brother Clyfforthe, and me, had by credible persons of Scotland, this abomynable act not only to be done by dyverse of the Mershe, but also the afore named persons of Tyvidaill, and consented to, as by appearance, by the Erle of Murey, upon Friday at night last, let slyp C of the best horsemen of Glendaill, with a parte of your highnes subjects of Berwyke, together with George Dowglas, whoo came into Ingland agayne, in the dawning of the day; but afore theyre retorne, they dyd mar the Earl of Murreis provisions at Coldingham; for they did not only burne the said town of Coldingham, with all the corne thereunto belonging, which is esteemed worthe cii marke sterling; but alsoo burned twa townes nye adjoining thereunto,

called Branerdergest and the Black Hill, and toke xxiii persons, 1x horse, with cc hed of cataill, which, now, as I am informed, hathe not only been a stave of the said Erle of Murreis not coming to the Bordure as yet, but alsoo, that none inlande man will adventure they self upon the Marches. And as for the tax that shulde have been grauntyd for finding of the said iii hundred men, is utterly denied. Upon which the King of Scotland departed from Edynburgh to Stirling, and as yet there doth remayn. And also I, by the advice of my brother Clyfforth, have devysed, that within this iii nyghts, Godde willing, Kelsey, in like case, shall be brent, with all the corn in the said town; and then they shall have noo place to lye any garyson in nygh unto the Borders. And as I shall atteigne further knowledge, I shall not faill to satisfye your highnes, according to my most bounden dutie. And for this burnyng of Kelsey is devysed to be done secretly, by Tyndaill and Ryddisdale. And thus the holy Trynite and . . . your most royal estate, with long lyf, and as much increase of honour as your most noble heart can desire. *At Werkworth the xxiid day of October.*" (1552.)—SCOTT.

1. 40. Watt Tinlinn. 'This person was, in my younger days, the theme of many a fireside tale. He was a retainer of the Buccleuch family, and held for his Border service a small tower on the frontiers of Liddesdale. Watt was, by profession, a *sutor*, but, by inclination and practice, an archer and warrior. Upon one occasion, the captain of Bewcastle, military governor of that wild district of Cumberland, is said to have made an incursion into Scotland, in which he was defeated, and forced to fly. Watt Tinlinn pursued him closely through a dangerous morass; the captain, however, gained the firm ground; and seeing Tinlinn dismounted, and floundering in the bog, used these words of insult:—"Sutor Watt, ye cannot sew your boots; the heels *risp*, and the seams *rive*." "If I cannot sew," retorted Tinlinn, discharging a shaft, which nailed the captain's thigh to his saddle, "if I cannot sew, I can *yerk*"—(*twitch*)."—SCOTT. With Tinlinn's arrival at Branksome, compare Jamie Telfer's, Border Minstrelsy:—

'And when they cam to Branksome Ha'

They shouted a' baith loud and hie,

Till up and spak him auld Buccleuch,

Said—"Whae's this brings the fraye to me?"

"It's I, Jamie Telfer o' the Fair Dodhead,

And a harried man I think I be!

There's naught left in the Fair Dodhead

But a greeting wife and bairnies three."

l. 51. a **Warden-Raid**. A raid commanded by the Warden in person.

l. 55. **hag**, the broken ground in a bog.

l. 56. **Billhope stag**. 'There is an old rhyme, which thus celebrates the places in Liddesdale remarkable for game:—

"Billhope braes for bucks and raes,
And Carit haugh for swine,
And Tarras for the good bull trout,
If he be ta'en in time."

'The bucks and roes, as well as the old swine, are now extinct ; but the good bull-trout is still famous.'—SCOTT.

l. 60. **Of bracelet proud**: 'As the Borderers were indifferent about the furniture of their habitations, so much exposed to be burned and plundered, they were proportionally anxious to display splendour in decorating and ornamenting their females.—See Lesley, *de Moribus Lîmitaneorum*.'—SCOTT.

l. 74. **Belted Will Howard**. 'Lord William Howard, third son of Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, succeeded to Naworth Castle, and a large domain annexed to it, in right of his wife Elizabeth, sister of George Lord Dacre, who died without heirs-male, in the 11th of Queen Elizabeth. By a poetical anachronism, he is introduced into the romance a few years earlier than he actually flourished. He was warden of the Western Marches ; and, from the rigour with which he repressed the Border excesses, the name of Belted Will Howard is still famous in our traditions. In the castle of Naworth, his apartments, containing a bedroom, oratory, and library, are still shown. They impress us with an unpleasing idea of the life of a Lord Warden of the Marches. Three or four strong doors, separating these rooms from the rest of the castle, indicate the apprehensions of treachery from his garrison ; and the secret winding passages, through which he could privately descend into the guard-room, or even into the dungeons, imply the necessity of no small degree of secret superintendence on the part of the governor. As the ancient books and furniture have remained undisturbed, the venerable appearance of these apartments, and the armour scattered around the chamber, almost lead us to expect the arrival of the warden in person. Naworth Castle is situated near Brampton in Cumberland. Lord William Howard is ancestor of the Earls of Carlisle.'—SCOTT.

l. 75. **Lord Dacre**. 'The well-known name of Dacre is derived from the exploits of one of their ancestors at the siege of Acre, or Ptolemais, under Richard Cœur de Lion. There were two powerful

branches of that name. The first family, called Lord Dacres of the South, held the castle of the same name, and are ancestors to the present Lord Dacre. The other family, descended from the same stock, were called Lord Dacres of the North, and were barons of Gilsland and Graystock. A chieftain of the latter branch was warden of the West Marches during the reign of Edward VI. He was a man of a hot and obstinate character, as appears from some particulars of Lord Surrey's letter to Henry VIII, giving an account of his behaviour at the siege and storm of Jedburgh. It is printed in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, Appendix to the Introduction.—SCOTT.

1. 76. German hackbut-men. "In the wars with Scotland, Henry VIII. and his successors employed numerous bands of mercenary troops. At the battle of Pinky, there were in the English army six hundred hackbutterers on foot, and two hundred on horseback, composed chiefly of foreigners. On the 27th of September, 1549, the Duke of Somerset, Lord Protector, writes to the Lord Dacre, warden of the West Marches:—"The Almaines, in number two thousand, very valiant soldiers, shall be sent to you shortly from Newcastle, together with Sir Thomas Holcroft, and with the force of your wardenry, (which we would were advanced to the most strength of horsemen that might be,) shall make the attempt to Loughmaben, being of no such strength but that it may be skailed with ladders, whereof, beforehand, we would you caused secretly some number to be provided; or else undermined with the pyke-axe, and so taken: either to be kept for the King's Majesty, or otherwise to be defaced, and taken from the profits of the enemy. And in like manner the house of Carlaverock to be used." Repeated mention occurs of the Almaines, in the subsequent correspondence; and the enterprise seems finally to have been abandoned, from the difficulty of providing these strangers with the necessary "victuals and carriages in so poor a country as Dumfries-shire."—*History of Cumberland*, vol. i. Introd. p. lxi. From the battle-pieces of the ancient Flemish painters, we learn, that the Low-Country and German soldiers marched to an assault with their right knees bared. And we may also observe, in such pictures, the extravagance to which they carried the fashion of ornamenting their dress with knots of ribbon. This custom of the Germans is alluded to in the *Mirror for Magistrates*, p. 121:—

"Their pleited garments therewith well accord,

All jagde and frounst, with divers colours deckt."—SCOTT.

l. 99. their Chief's defence to aid. The gathering of the various families of the clan Scott, from the valleys of Teviot, Ettrick, and Yarrow, is given with Homeric detail. Jeffrey thought there was something too much of it, considering the real insignificance of such bandit lairds as Sir John Scott of Thirlestane and Walter Scott of Harden. But it is all in the spirit of the clan minstrel. The poet explains in prose notes that all the statements, rendered with such vivacity in the text, are founded on tradition and documentary evidence.

ll. 100-104. These lines were not in the first edition. The suggestion is taken from the ballad of Archie of Ca'field:—

‘There was horsing, horsing in haste,
And there was marching upon the lee.’

l. 109. Royal James. James V, whose charter of the arms mentioned is quoted by Scott.

l. 124. The bend of Murdieston. ‘The family of Harden are descended from a younger son of the Laird of Buccleuch, who flourished before the estate of Murdieston was acquired by the marriage of one of those chieftains with the heiress, in 1296. Hence they bear the cognizance of the Scotts upon the field; whereas those of the Buccleuch are disposed upon a bend dexter, assumed in consequence of that marriage.’—SCOTT. The poet was himself descended from the family of Harden.

l. 149. Hearken, Ladye, to the tale. The Ladye, of course, is the Minstrel's Ladye, the Duchess of Monmouth and Buccleuch. This tale was not in the first edition.

l. 159. heriot, ‘originally a tribute to the lord of a manor of the horse or habiliments of the deceased tenants, in order that the *militiae apparatus* might continue to be used for the purpose of national defence by each succeeding tenant. On the decline of the military tenures, the heriot was commuted for a money payment, or for the tenant's best beast (*averium*), or dead chattel, which is most commonly compounded for.’—Wharton's ‘Law Lexicon.’ For derivation, see Skeat.

l. 229. Bellenden. ‘Bellenden is situated near the head of Borthwick water, and being in the centre of the possessions of the Scotts; was frequently used as their place of rendezvous and gathering word.’—SCOTT. But on this occasion their place of rendezvous would seem to have been Branksome itself. The four lines ending with Bellenden are an afterthought, added to the poem after its first appearance.

ll. 291 and 311. Almayn, or German, mercenaries, were often

employed in mediæval wars, especially in Italy and France. But indeed, 'free companies,' as they were called, whose services were at the disposal of the highest bidder, were formed of all nationalities. They were very active on both sides in the fourteenth-century wars between France and England, some of the leaders being prominent figures in the politics of the period. Scott quotes the following incident from Berners's *Froissart* (vol. i. c. 393), to illustrate their independence of king and country. 'The mercenary adventurers, whom, in 1380, the Earl of Cambridge carried to the assistance of the King of Portugal against the Spaniards, mutinied for want of regular pay. At an assembly of their leaders, Sir John Soltier, a natural son of Edward the Black Prince, thus addressed them:—"I counsayle, let us be alle of one alliance, and of one accorde, and let us among ourselves reyse up the banner of St. George, and let us be frendes to God, and enemyes to alle the worlde; for without we make ourselfe to be feared, we gete nothyng." "By my fayth," quod Sir William Helmon, 'ye saye right well, and so let us do.' They all agreed with one voyce, and so regarded among them who shulde be their capitayne. Then they advysed in the case how they coude nat have a better capitayne than Sir John Soltier. For they sulde than have good leyser to do yvel, and they thought he was more meelyer thereto than any other. Then they raised up the penon of St. George, and cried, "A Soltier! a Soltier! the valyaunt bastarde! frendes to God, and enemies to all the worlde!"' Scott himself has drawn an incomparable picture of the free-lance in Dugald Dalgetty, in 'A Legend of Montrose.'

1. 319. the levin-darting guns. There is, strange to say, the greatest uncertainty about the exact date of the introduction of hand-guns into warfare. The earliest known use of them in England was in 1471, when Edward IV landed in Yorkshire, having in his train 300 Flemings armed with hand-guns. They are also known to have been used at the siege of Berwick in 1521. The English government was slow in adopting the new invention, though Scott is perhaps not strictly accurate in arming English soldiers with the bow only as late as 1559. The slow spread of firearms was probably due more to the scarcity of gunpowder than to anything else. Till the discovery of nitre in India in the seventeenth century, gunpowder was not plentiful. *Morsing-horn* is explained by Scott to mean 'powder-flask.' *Falcon* and *culver* (l. 346) were names for small cannon, which were in use for a century before hand firearms were introduced.

1. 365. a gauntlet on a spear. 'A glove upon a lance was the emblem of faith among the ancient Borderers, who were wont, when any one broke his word, to expose this emblem, and proclaim him a faithless villain at the first Border meeting. This ceremony was much dreaded. See Leslie.'—SCOTT.

1. 377. swith, quickly. 'Shall renne to the toun, and that ful swithe.'—Chaucer, 'Pardoner's Tale,' l. 334.

1. 387. pursuivant-at-arms, literally, 'one who follows,' i.e. upon a herald, an officer-at-arms of the degree below a herald. The herald had to pass through this stage on his way to the higher dignity, and, while a poursuivant, wore his tabard with the sleeves turned round to back and breast. See note to Strutt's 'Dress and Habits,' Planché's edition, p. 188. It is doubtful whether Scott was right in dressing the poursuivant in Lord Howard's livery (l. 383): he was a state official.

1. 407. flemens-firth, 'an asylum for outlaws.'—SCOTT. Fleme, to exile; firth, a refuge.

1. 409. march-treason pain. 'Several species of offences, peculiar to the Border, constituted what was called march-treason. Among others, was the crime of riding, or causing to ride, against the opposite country during the time of truce. Thus, in an indenture made at the water of Eske, beside Salom, on the 25th day of March, 1334, betwixt noble lords and mighty, Sirs Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, and Archibald Douglas, Lord of Galloway, a truce is agreed upon until the 1st day of July; and it is expressly accorded, "Gif ony stellis authir on the ta part, or on the tothyr, that he shall be hanget or heofdit; and gif ony company stellis any gudes within the trieux beforesayd, ane of that company sall be hanget or heofdit, and the remnant sall restore the gudys stolen in the dubble."—*History of Westmoreland and Cumberland*, Introd. p. xxxix.'—SCOTT.

1. 418. warrison is explained by Scott to mean 'note of assault.' 'Warison,' in Barbour, Chaucer, and Malory, means 'reward': I do not know Scott's authority for using the word in this sense.

1. 437. Will cleanse him. 'In dubious cases, the innocence of Border criminals was occasionally referred to their own oath. The form of excusing bills, or indictments, by Border-oath, ran thus:—"You shall swear by heaven above you, hell beneath you, by your part of Paradise, by all that God made in six days and seven nights, and by God himself, you are whart out sackless of art, part, way, witting, ridd, kenning, having, or recetting of any of the goods and

cattels named in this bill. So help you God."—*History of Cumberland*, Introd. p. xxv.'—SCOTT.

1. 442. **Knighthood of Douglas's sword.** 'The dignity of knighthood, according to the original institution, had this peculiarity, that it did not flow from the monarch, but could be conferred by one who himself possessed it, upon any squire who, after due probation, was found to merit the honour of chivalry. Latterly, this power was confined to generals, who were wont to create knights bannerets after or before an engagement. Even so late as the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Essex highly offended his jealous sovereign by the indiscriminate exertion of this privilege. Among others, he knighted the witty Sir John Harrington, whose favour at court was by no means enhanced by his new honours.—See the *Nugæ Antiquæ*, edited by Mr. Park. But probably the latest instance of knighthood, conferred by a subject, was in the case of Thomas Ker, knighted by the Earl of Huntly, after the defeat of the Earl of Argyle in the battle of Belrinnes. The fact is attested, both by a poetical and prose account of the engagement, contained in an ancient MS. in the Advocates' Library, and edited by Mr. Dayell, in *Godly Sangs and Ballets*, Edin. 1802.'—SCOTT. Readers of the 'Legend of Montrose' will remember the knighting of Dalgetty by Montrose 'in a stricken field.'

1. 443. **Ancram's ford.** 'The battle of Ancram Moor, or Peniel-heuch, was fought A.D. 1545. The English, commanded by Sir Ralph Evers and Sir Brian Latoun, were totally routed, and both their leaders slain in the action. The Scottish army was commanded by Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, assisted by the Laird of Buccleuch and Norman Lesley.'—SCOTT.

1. 453. **lyke-wake**, the watching of a corpse (*lykham*, a body) before burial.

1. 458. **Pensils**, or pensels, is used by Lord Berners for the *pennonceaux*, little pennons or streamers in the form of a swallow's tail, attached to the lance of a knight. When the Black Prince created Sir John Chandos a knight banneret before the battle of Navaretta, he cut off the tails of his pennoncel to make it a banner.

1. 475. **weapon-schaw**, a show of weapons, a military review.

1. 505. **the blanche lion.** 'This was the cognizance of the noble house of Howard in all its branches. The crest, or bearing, of a warrior, was often used as a *nomme de guerre*. Thus Richard III acquired his well-known epithet, *The Boar of York*. In the violent satire on Cardinal Wolsey, written by Roy, commonly, but erroneously, imputed to Dr. Bull, the Duke of Buckingham is called the

Beautiful Swan, and the Duke of Norfolk, or Earl of Surrey, the *White Lion*.—SCOTT.

l. 513. *Single fight*. 'It may easily be supposed, that trial by single combat, so peculiar to the feudal system, was common on the Borders. In 1558, the well-known Kirkaldy of Grange fought a duel with Ralph Evre, brother to the then Lord Eyre, in consequence of a dispute about a prisoner said to have been ill-treated by the Lord Evre. Pitscottie gives the following account of the affair:—"The Lord of Ivers his brother provoked William Kirkaldy of Grange to fight with him, in singular combat, on horseback, with spears; who, keeping the appointment, accompanied with Monsieur d'Ossel, lieutenant to the French King, and the garrison of Haymouth, and Mr. Ivers, accompanied with the governor and garrison of Berwick, it was discharged, under the pain of treason, that any man should come near the champions within a flight-shot, except one man for either of them, to bear their spears, two trumpets, and two lords to be judges. When they were in readiness, the trumpets sounded, the heraulds cried, and the judges let them go. They then encountered very fiercely; but Grange struck his spear through his adversary's shoulder, and bare him off his horse, being sore wounded: but whether he died, or not, it is uncertain."—P. 202.'—SCOTT, who quotes also the documents in a Border duel of date 1602 to 'show at how late a period the trial by combat was resorted to on the Border, as a proof of guilt or innocence.'

l. 570. *the jovial harper*. 'The person here alluded to, is one of our ancient Border minstrels, called Rattling Roaring Willie. This *soubriquet* was probably derived from his bullying disposition; being, it would seem, such a roaring boy as is frequently mentioned in old plays. While drinking at Newmill, upon Teviot, about five miles above Hawick, Willie chanced to quarrel with one of his own profession, who was usually distinguished by the odd name of Sweet Milk, from a place on Rule Water so called. They retired to a meadow on the opposite side of the Teviot, to decide the contest with their swords, and Sweet Milk was killed on the spot. A thorn-tree marks the scene of the murder, which is still called Sweet Milk Thorn. Willie was taken and executed at Jedburgh, bequeathing his name to the beautiful Scotch air called "Rattling Roaring Willie." Ramsay, who set no value on traditionary lore, published a few verses of this song in the *Tea Table Miscellany*, carefully suppressing all which had any connexion with the history of the author and origin of the piece. In this case, however, honest Allan is in

some degree justified, by the extreme worthlessness of the poetry.'—SCOTT.

l. 574. *battle-laws*. 'The title to the most ancient collection of Border regulations runs thus:—"Be it remembered, that, on the 18th day of December, 1468, Earl *William Douglas* assembled the whole lords, freeholders, and eldest Borderers, that best knowledge had, at the college of *Lincluden*; and there he caused these lords and Borderers bodily to be sworn, the Holy Gospel touched, that they, justly and truly, after their cunning, should decree, decern, deliver, and put in order and writing, the statutes, ordinances, and uses of marche, that were ordained in *Black Archibald of Douglas's* days, and Archibald his son's days, in time of warfare; and they came again to him advisedly with these statutes and ordinances, which were in time of warfare before. The said Earl *William*, seeing the statutes in writing decreed and delivered by the said lords and Borderers, thought them right speedful and profitable to the Borders; the which statutes, ordinances, and points of warfare, he took, and the whole lords and Borderers he caused bodily to be sworn, that they should maintain and supply him at their goodly power, to do the law upon those that should break the statutes underwritten. Also, the said Earl *William*, and lords, and eldest Borderers, made certain points to be treason in time of warfare to be used, which were no treason before his time, but to be treason in his time, and in all time coming."—SCOTT.

CANTO V.

It may be worth remembering, as a striking instance of Scott's romantic idealisation of Border life, that the subject of the Minstrel's prologue, now one of the most familiar quotations from Scott, was the jovial harper, 'Rattling Roaring Willie.' See note on l. 570.

l. 52. *Douglas*. 'The chief of this potent race of heroes, about the date of the poem, was Archibald Douglas, seventh Earl of Angus, a man of great courage and activity. The Bloody Heart was the well-known cognizance of the House of Douglas, assumed from the time of good Lord James, to whose care Robert Bruce committed his heart, to be carried to the Holy Land.'—SCOTT.

l. 54. *Wedderburne*. 'Sir David Home of Wedderburn, who was slain in the fatal battle of Flodden, left seven sons by his wife,

Isabel, daughter of Hoppringle of Galashiels (now Pringle of Whitebank). They were called the Seven Spears of Wedderburne.'—SCOTT.

l. 56. Swinton. 'At the battle of Beauge, in France, Thomas, Duke of Clarence, brother to Henry V, was unhorsed by Sir John Swinton of Swinton, who distinguished him by a coronet set with precious stones, which he wore around his helmet. The family of Swinton is one of the most ancient in Scotland, and produced many celebrated warriors.'—SCOTT. Sir John Swinton was one of the poet's ancestors.

ll. 63, 65. Hepburn, Home. 'The Earls of Home, as descendants of the Dunbars, ancient Earls of March, carried a lion rampant, argent; but, as a difference, changed the colour of the shield from gules to vert, in allusion to Greenlaw, their ancient possession. The slogan, or war-cry, of this powerful family, was, "A Home! a Home!" It was anciently placed in an escrol above the crest. The helmet is armed with a lion's head erased gules, with a cap of state gules, turned up ermine.

'The Hepburns, a powerful family in East Lothian, were usually in close alliance with the Homes. The chief of this clan was Hepburn, Lord of Hailes, a family which terminated in the too famous Earl of Bothwell.'—SCOTT.

l. 110. football. 'The foot-ball was anciently a very favourite sport all through Scotland, but especially upon the Borders. Sir John Carmichael of Carmichael, Warden of the Middle Marches, was killed in 1600 by a band of the Armstrongs, returning from a foot-ball match. Sir Robert Carey, in his Memoirs, mentions a great meeting, appointed by the Scotch riders to be held at Kelso for the purpose of playing at foot-ball, but which terminated in an incursion upon England. At present, the foot-ball is often played by the inhabitants of adjacent parishes, or of the opposite banks of a stream. The victory is contested with the utmost fury, and very serious accidents have sometimes taken place in the struggle.'—SCOTT.

l. 122. 'Twixt truce and war. 'Notwithstanding the constant wars upon the Borders, and the occasional cruelties which marked the mutual inroads, the inhabitants on either side do not appear to have regarded each other with that violent and personal animosity which might have been expected. On the contrary, like the outposts of hostile armies, they often carried on something resembling friendly intercourse, even in the middle of hostilities; and it is

evident, from various ordinances against trade and intermarriages, between English and Scottish Borderers, that the governments of both countries were jealous of their cherishing too intimate a connexion. Froissart says of both nations, that "Englyshmen on the one party, and Scottes on the other party, are good men of warre; for when they meet, there is a harde fight without sparynge. There is no hoo [*truce*] between them, as long as spears, swords, axes, or daggers, will endure, but lay on eche upon uther; and whan they be well beaten, and that the one party hath obtained the victory, they then glorifye so in theyre dedes of armies, and are so joyfull, that such as be taken they shall be ransomed, or that they go out of the felde; so that shortly eche of them is so content with other, that, at their departynge, curtyslye they will say, God thank you."—*Berners's Froissart*, vol. ii. p. 396. The Border meetings, of truce, which, although places of merchandise and merriment, often witnessed the most bloody scenes, may serve to illustrate the description in the text. They are vividly pourtrayed in the old ballad of the Reidswire. [See *Minstrelsy*.] Both parties came armed to a meeting of the wardens, yet they intermixed fearlessly and peaceably with each other in mutual sports and familiar intercourse, until a casual fray arose:—

"Then was there nought but bow and spear,
And every man pulled out a brand."

'In the 29th stanza of this canto, there is an attempt to express some of the mixed feelings with which the Borderers on each side were led to regard their neighbours.'—SCOTT.

l. 129. Wassel, wassail, carousal. Geoffrey of Monmouth's story of the meeting of Vortigern and Rowena is well known. Hengist, Rowena's father, invited Vortigern to a feast, and 'when that was over, the young lady came out of her chamber bearing a golden cup full of wine, and making a low courtesy, said to him, "Lord King, *was hal!*" The King, at the sight of the lady's face, was on a sudden surprised and inflamed with her beauty; and calling to his interpreter, asked him what she said and what answer he should make her. "She called you Lord King," said the interpreter, "and offered to drink your health. Your answer to her must be *Drinc hal!* Vortigern accordingly answered *Drinc hal!* and bade her drink; after which he took the cup from her hand, kissed her, and drank himself. From that time to this, it has been the custom in Britain that he who drinks to any one says *Was hal!* and he that pledges him answers *Drinc hal!*' *Was hal* means simply

'be hale or whole,' and *Drinc hal*, Drink, hale, 'drink, and health be with you.' See Skeat's Dictionary under *wassail*.

l. 139. **Clan watchword to stragglers.** 'Patten remarks, with bitter censure, the disorderly conduct of the English Borderers who attended the Protector Somerset on his expedition against Scotland:—"As we wear then a setting, and the tents a setting up, among all things els commendable in our hole journey, one thing seemed to me an intollerable disorder and abuse: that whereas always, both in all tounes of war, and in all campos of armies, quietness and stilnes without nois, is, principally in the night, after the watch is set, observed, (I neede not reason why,) our northern prikers, the Borderers, notwithstanding, with great enormitie, (as thought me,) and not unlike (to be playn) unto a masterles hounde howling in a hie way when he hath lost him he waited upon, sum hoopynge, sum whistlyng, and most with crying, A Berwyke, a Berwyke! A Fenwyke, a Fenwyke! A Bulmer, a Bulmer! or so ootherwise as theyr captains names wear, never blin'de these troublesome and dangerous noyses all the nyghte longe. They said, they did it to find their captain and fellows; but if the souldiers of our oother countreys and sheres had used the same maner, in that case we should have oft times had the state of our campe more like the outrage of a dissolute huntyng, than the quiet of a well ordered armye. It is a feat of war in mine opinion that might right well be left. I could reherse causes (but yf I take it, they are better unspeken than uttred, unless the faut wear sure to be amended) that might shew thei move alweis more peral to our armie, but in their one nyght's so doynge, than they shew good service (as some sey) in a hooole vyage."—*Apud Dalzell's Fragments*, p. 75.'—SCOTT.

l. 153. **lists**, an enclosure for combats or tournaments, often made, as in Chaucer's 'Knight's Tale' (ll. 1025, &c.), with elaborate stands for spectators. The etymology is disputed. See Skeat. It may possibly be taken from the list of cloth. In 'Catholicon Anglicum,' Mr. Herbage says that 'anything edged or bordered was formerly said to be *listed*': thus in the "Destruction of Troy," l. 10669, the outskirts of an army are termed *listes*.'

l. 169. **First woke.** So Canace, after 'the feast in Chaucer's 'Squire's Tale' (ll. 360, &c.), was the first to awake.

l. 242. **Harden and Thirlestane.** These chiefs had a personal interest for Scott, Harden being an ancestor of his own, and Thirlestane of Lord Napier, Lord Lieutenant of the county of which Scott was Sheriff when the Lay was written.

1. 474. His foeman's epitaph. Deloraine's respect for his enemy is in the best spirit of chivalry. Compare Prince Hal's epitaph on Hotspur, 1 Henry IV, v. 4. 87. Froissart's account of the behaviour of the Earl of Montfort over the dead body of Charles de Blois at the battle of Auray is another parallel. 'All the knights then present accompanied him to the spot where he was lying apart from the others, covered by a shield, which he ordered to be taken away, and looked at him very sorrowfully. After having paused a while, he exclaimed, "Ah, my lord Charles, sweet cousin, how much mischief has happened to Brittany from your having supported byarms your pretensions. God help me, I am truly unhappy at finding you in this situation, but at present this cannot be amended." Upon which he burst into tears.'

1. 490. Snaffle, spur and spear.

'The lands that over Ouse to Berwick forth do bear
Have for their blazon had, the snaffle, spur and spear.'

Drayton's *Polyolbion*, Song 13.

1. 491. the best to follow gear.

'Doughty Dan o' the Houlet Hirst
Thow was aye gude at a birst;
Gude wi' a bow, and better wi' a speir,
The bauldest Marchman that e'er follow'd gear.'

'The Fray of Suport,' Border Minstrelsy.

1. 493. the chase couldst wind. 'The pursuit of Border marauders was followed by the injured party and his friends with blood-hounds and bugle-horn, and was called the *hot-trod*. He was entitled, if his dog could trace the scent, to follow the invaders into the opposite kingdom; a privilege which often occasioned bloodshed. In addition to what has been said of the blood-hound, I may add, that the breed was kept up by the Buccleuch family on their Border estates till within the 18th century. A person was alive in the memory of man, who remembered a blood-hound being kept at Eldinhope, in Ettrick Forest, for whose maintenance the tenant had an allowance of meal. At that time the sheep were always watched at night. Upon one occasion, when the duty had fallen on the narrator, then a lad, he became exhausted with fatigue, and fell asleep upon a bank, near sun-rising. Suddenly he was awakened by the tread of horses, and saw five men well mounted and armed, ride briskly over the edge of the hill. They stopped and looked at the flock; but the day was too far broken to admit the chance of their carrying any of them off. One of them, in spite, leaped from his

horse, and coming to the shepherd, seized him by the belt he wore round his waist; and, setting his foot upon his body, pulled it till it broke, and carried it away with him. They rode off at the gallop; and, the shepherd giving the alarm, the blood-hound was turned loose, and the people in the neighbourhood alarmed. The marauders, however, escaped, notwithstanding a sharp pursuit. This circumstance serves to show how very long the license of the Borderers continued in some degree to manifest itself.—SCOTT.

CANTO VI.

In an interesting letter to Miss Seward (already referred to in our Introduction, p. 18), Scott writes as follows about the Sixth Canto:—‘The Sixth Canto is altogether redundant; for the poem should certainly have closed with the union of the lovers, when the interest, if any, was at an end. But what could I do? I had my book and my page still on my hands, and must get rid of them at all events. Manage them as I would, their catastrophe must have been insufficient to occupy an entire canto; so I was fain to eke it out with the songs of the minstrels.’ (*Lockhart’s Life*, vol. ii. p. 29, ed. 1837.)

I have already argued (Introduction, p. 19) that the last canto is no more redundant than the first; that it is a necessary part of the scheme of the poem, essential to carrying it out with the proportion assigned to the supernatural element at the beginning. But if Scott himself said that it was redundant, surely he must have known best? The answer to this is that we must not attach too much importance to a writer’s half-serious criticism of his own work, when he is called upon to defend it, in answer to the objections of so pertinacious a lady as the good Miss Seward. Scott at least must have been of a different opinion about the Sixth Canto when he wrote it, and we must take the work as it stands, not as seen by the author himself through the coloured medium of a casual passing mood.

George Ellis, the editor of *Specimens of Early English Poetry and Metrical Romances*, one of the most learned of Scott’s contemporaries in mediæval poetry and romance, ‘entertained some doubts about the propriety of dwelling so long on the minstrel songs in the last canto,’ but this was because he was not aware of any ‘ancient

authority for such a practice.' To the canto on its own merits he did not object. It is to be remarked that, although the songs are episodical as regards the action of the poem, they are closely interwoven with the sentiment. The subjects of them are such as would naturally occur at the close of a tale in which three of the moving powers are love, magic, and supernatural agency. The first is a love ballad, a congratulation of the happy lovers, and serves to dismiss them gracefully from the stage: the last two put the reader in tune for the wonders of the final incident.

Stanzas I. and II.—Two or three small coincidences, in idea and diction, seem to show that certain lines from the 'Pleasures of Memory' (near middle of Part II.) were in Scott's mind when he wrote these famous patriotic stanzas:—

'And as the sparks of social love expand,
As the heart opens in a foreign land,
And with a brother's warmth, a brother's smile,
The stranger greets each native of his isle.

* * * * *

Above, below, aerial murmurs swell,
From hanging wood, brown heath, and bushy dell.

* * * * *

A blithe and blooming Forester explored
Those loftier scenes Salvator's soul adored;
The rocky pass half-hung with shaggy wood,
And the cleft oak flung boldly o'er the flood.'

By Yarrow's stream, &c.—Scott proved the genuineness of this sentiment in a very touching way. When he was on a cruise in the Mediterranean, undertaken with the hope of recruiting his shattered health, and felt that his end could not long be delayed, he hurried across Europe that he might draw his last breath at home. This was his last object of interest; on the journey down from London he lay in the carriage in a kind of stupor till his beloved Borderland was reached (Lockhart's Life, vol. vii. p. 385). 'As we descended the vale of the Gala he began to gaze about him, and by degrees it was obvious that he was recognising the features of that familiar landscape. Presently he murmured a name or two—*Gala Water, surely, Buckholm, Torwoodlee*. As we rounded the hill at Ladhofe, and the outline of the Eildons burst on him, he became greatly excited, and when turning himself on the couch his eye

caught at length his own towers, at the distance of a mile, he sprang up with a cry of delight.'

l. 54. *owche*, a jewel, otherwise spelt *nowche*. Baret, quoted in 'Catholicon Anglicum,' explains the word to mean 'a piece, morcell, or gobbet, that is cut from something; a carcanet or ouch to hang about a gentlewoman's necke, segmentum.' It would seem that 'owch' is to be classed with English words that have lost an initial *n*, *adder*, *auger*, *orange*, &c., and is radically the same word as notch.

l. 68. *forbidden spell*. 'Popular belief, though contrary to the doctrines of the Church, made a favourable distinction betwixt magicians, and necromancers or wizards;—the former were supposed to command the evil spirits, and the latter to serve, or at least to be in league and compact with, those enemies of mankind. The arts of subjecting the demons were manifold; sometimes the fiends were actually swindled by the magicians, as in the case of the bargain betwixt one of their number and the poet Virgil.'—SCOTT. See the Romance of Virgilius.

l. 79. 'A merlin, or sparrow-hawk, was actually carried by ladies of rank, as a falcon was, in time of peace, the constant attendant of a knight or baron. See *Latham on Falconry*.—Godscroft relates, that when Mary of Lorraine was regent, she pressed the Earl of Angus to admit a royal garrison into his Castle of Tantallon. To this he returned no direct answer; but, as if apostrophizing a goss-hawk, which sat on his wrist, and which he was feeding during the Queen's speech, he exclaimed, "The devil's in this greedy glede, she will never be full."—*Hume's History of the House of Douglas*, 1743, vol. ii. p. 131. Barclay complains of the common and indecent practice of bringing hawks and hounds into churches.'—SCOTT.

l. 84. *the gorgeous festival*. Scott's description of the feast differs from the style of the metrical romances which he imitated chiefly in being more select in its particulars. The ancient 'minstrel' generally put on the board every animal known to him. Hence the courtly Chaucer passes over such details as vulgar.

'I wol nat tellen of her strange sewes,
Ne of her swannes, ne of her heronsewes.'

l. 90. *princely peacock*. 'The peacock, it is well known, was considered, during the times of chivalry, not merely as an exquisite delicacy, but as a dish of peculiar solemnity. After being roasted,

it was again decorated with its plumage, and a sponge, dipped in lighted spirits of wine, was placed in its bill. When it was introduced on days of grand festival, it was the signal for the adventurous knights to take upon them vows to do some deed of chivalry, "before the peacock and the ladies."

'The boar's head was also a usual dish of feudal splendour. In Scotland it was sometimes surrounded with little banners, displaying the colours and achievements of the baron at whose board it was served.—*Pinkerton's History*, vol. i. p. 432.'—SCOTT.

l. 120. **Stout Hunthill.** 'The Rutherfords of Hunthill were an ancient race of Border Lairds, whose names occur in history, sometimes as defending the frontier against the English, sometimes as disturbing the peace of their own country. Dickon Draw-the-sword was son to the ancient warrior, called in tradition the Cock of Hunthill, remarkable for leading into battle nine sons, gallant warriors, all sons of the aged champion.'—SCOTT. The poet's mother was a Rutherford.

l. 128. **bit his glove.** 'To bite the thumb, or the glove, seems not to have been considered, upon the Border, as a gesture of contempt, though so used by Shakspeare, but as a pledge of mortal revenge. It is yet remembered, that a young gentleman of Teviotdale, on the morning after a hard drinking-bout, observed that he had bitten his glove. He instantly demanded of his companion, with whom he had quarrelled? And, learning that he had had words with one of the party, insisted on instant satisfaction, asserting, that though he remembered nothing of the dispute, yet he was sure he never would have bit his glove unless he had received some unpardonable insult. He fell in the duel, which was fought near Selkirk, in 1721.'—SCOTT.

l. 155. **Buccleuch's name.** See note on *Introd.* l. 53. 'The Buccleuch arms have been altered, and now allude less pointedly to this hunting, whether real or fabulous. The family now bear *Or*, upon a bend azure, a mullet betwixt two crescents of the field; in addition to which, they formerly bore in the field a hunting-horn. The supporters, now two ladies, were formerly a hound and buck, or, according to the old terms, a *hart of leash* and a *hart of greece*. The family of Scott of Howpasley and Thirlstane long retained the bugle-horn; they also carried a bent bow and arrow in the sinister cantle, perhaps as a difference. It is said the motto was—*Best riding by moonlight*, in allusion to the crescents on the shield, and perhaps to the habits of those who bore it. The motto now given is *Amo*, applying to the female supporters.'—SCOTT.

l. 181. Albert Græme. “John Grahame, second son of *Malice*, Earl of *Monteith*, commonly surnamed *John with the Bright Sword*, upon some displeasure risen against him at court, retired with many of his clan and kindred into the English Borders, in the reign of King Henry the Fourth, where they seated themselves; and many of their posterity have continued there ever since. Mr. Sandford, speaking of them, says, (which indeed was applicable to most of the Borderers on both sides,) ‘They were all stark moss-troopers, and arrant thieves: Both to England and Scotland outlawed: yet sometimes connived at, because they gave intelligence forth of Scotland, and would raise 400 horse at any time upon a raid of the English into Scotland. A saying is recorded of a mother to her son, (which is now become proverbial,) *Ride, Rowley, hough’s i’ the pot*: that is, the last piece of beef was in the pot, and therefore it was high time for him to go and fetch more.’”—*Introduction to the History of Cumberland*.

‘The residence of the Græmes being chiefly in the Debateable Land, so called because it was claimed by both kingdoms, their depredations extended both to England and Scotland, with impunity; for as both wardens accounted them the proper subjects of their own prince, neither inclined to demand reparation for their excesses from the opposite officers, which would have been an acknowledgment of his jurisdiction over them.—See a long correspondence on this subject betwixt Lord Dacre and the English Privy Council, in *Introduction to History of Cumberland*. The Debateable Land was finally divided betwixt England and Scotland, by commissioners appointed by both nations.’—SCOTT.

l. 192. The sun shines fair, &c. Scott says:—‘This burden is adopted, with some alteration, from an old Scottish song, beginning thus:

“She lean’d her back against a thorn,
The sun shines fair on Carlisle wa’;
And there she has her young babe born,
And the lyon shall be lord of a’.”

l. 230. Surrey. ‘The gallant and unfortunate Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, was unquestionably the most accomplished cavalier of his time; and his sonnets display beauties which would do honour to a more polished age. He was beheaded on Tower-hill in 1546; a victim to the mean jealousy of Henry VIII, who could not bear so brilliant a character near his throne.

‘The song of the supposed bard is founded on an incident said to

have happened to the Earl in his travels. Cornelius Agrippa, the celebrated alchemist, showed him, in a looking-glass, the lovely Geraldine, to whose service he had devoted his pen and his sword. The vision represented her as indisposed, and reclining upon a couch, reading her lover's verses by the light of a waxen taper.'—SCOTT.

l. 312. *St. Clairs*. In a note on the family of St. Clair, now generally spelt Sinclair, in which he explains that they were of Norman extraction, and held lands in the south of Scotland as well as in Orkney, Scott quotes the following legend from a MS. history :—The King, in following the chase upon Pentland-hills, had often started a 'white faunch deer,' which had always escaped from his hounds; and he asked the nobles, who were assembled around him, whether any of them had dogs, which they thought might be more successful. No courtier would affirm that his hounds were fleetier than those of the King, until Sir William St. Clair of Rosline uncereemoniously said, he would wager his head that his two favourite dogs, *Help* and *Hold*, would kill the deer before she could cross the March-burn. The King instantly caught at his unwary offer, and betted the forest of Pentland-moor against the life of Sir William St. Clair. All the hounds were tied up, except a few ratches, or slow-hounds, to put up the deer; while Sir William St. Clair, posting himself in the best situation for slipping his dogs, prayed devoutly to Christ, the blessed Virgin, and St. Katherine. The deer was shortly after roused, and the hounds slipped; Sir William following on a gallant steed, to cheer his dogs. The hind, however, reached the middle of the brook; upon which the hunter threw himself from his horse in despair. At this critical moment, however, Hold stopped her in the brook; and Help, coming up, turned her back, and killed her on Sir William's side. The King descended from the kill, embraced Sir William, and bestowed on him the lands of Kirkton, Logan-house, Earncraig, &c., in free forestry. Sir William, in acknowledgment of St. Katherine's intercession, built the chapel of St. Katherine in the Hopes, the churchyard of which is still to be seen. The hill, from which Robert Bruce beheld this memorable chase, is still called the King's Hill; and the place where Sir William hunted, is called the Knight's Field.

l. 328. *Kings of the main*. 'The chiefs of the *Vakingr*, or Scandinavian pirates, assumed the title of *Sakonungr*, or Sea-kings. Ships, in the inflated language of the Scalds, are often termed the serpents of the ocean.'—SCOTT.

1. 336. The sea-snake. 'The *jormungandr*, or Snake of the Ocean, whose folds surround the earth, is one of the wildest fictions of the Edda. It was very nearly caught by the god Thor, who went to fish for it with a hook baited with a bull's head. In the battle betwixt the evil demons and the divinities of Odin, which is to precede the *Ragnaröck*, or Twilight of the Gods, this Snake is to act a conspicuous part.'

1. 337. The dread Maids. 'These were the *Valcyriur*, or Selectors of the Slain, despatched by Odin from Valhalla, to choose those who were to die, and to distribute the contest. They are well known to the English reader as Gray's Fatal Sisters.'—SCOTT.

1. 340. Of chiefs, &c. "'The northern warriors were usually entombed with their arms, and their other treasures. Thus, Angantyr, before commencing the duel in which he was slain, stipulated, that if he fell, his sword Tyrfing should be buried with him. His daughter, Hervor, afterwards took it from his tomb. The dialogue which passed betwixt her and Angantyr's spirit on this occasion has been often translated. The whole history may be found in the *Hervarar-Saga*. Indeed, the ghosts of the northern warriors were not wont tamely to suffer their tombs to be plundered; and hence the mortal heroes had an additional temptation to attempt such adventures; for they held nothing more worthy of their valour than to encounter supernatural beings."—*Bartholinus De causis contemptæ a Danis mortis*, lib. i. cap. 2, 9, 10, 13.'—SCOTT.

1. 358. Castle Ravensheuch. 'A large and strong castle, now ruinous, situated betwixt Kirkaldy and Dysart, on a steep crag, washed by the Frith of Forth. It was conferred on Sir William St. Clair as a slight compensation for the earldom of Orkney, by a charter of King James III., dated in 1471, and is now the property of Sir James St. Clair Erskine, (now Earl of Rosslyn,) representative of the family. It was long a principal residence of the Barons of Roslin.'—SCOTT.

1. 376. Roslin. 'The beautiful chapel of Roslin is still in tolerable preservation. It was founded in 1446, by William St. Clair, Prince of Orkney, Duke of Oldenburgh, Earl of Caithness and Stratherne, Lord St. Clair, Lord Niddesdale, Lord Admiral of the Scottish Seas, Lord Chief Justice of Scotland, Lord Warden of the three Marches, Baron of Roslin, Pentland, Pentlandmoor, &c., Knight of the Cockle, and of the Garter (as is affirmed), High Chancellor, Chamberlain, and Lieutenant of Scotland. This lofty person, whose titles, says Godscroft, might weary a Spaniard, built

the castle of Roslin, where he resided in princely splendour, and founded the chapel, which is in the most rich and florid style of Gothic architecture. Among the profuse carving on the pillars and buttresses, the rose is frequently introduced, in allusion to the name, with which, however, the flower has no connexion; the etymology being Rosslinnhe, the promontory of the linn, or water-fall. The chapel is said to appear on fire previous to the death of any of his descendants. This superstition, noticed by Slezer, in his *Theatrum Scotiae*, and alluded to in the text, is probably of Norwegian derivation, and may have been imported by the Earls of Orkney into their Lothian dominions. The tomb-fires of the north are mentioned in most of the Sagas.—SCOTT.

l. 405. the darkened hall. The coming on of darkness at the approach of an evil spirit is a commonplace in romance. There is an example in the ballad of 'King Henrie' in the Border Minstrelsy.

'He's ta'en him to his hunting ha',
 For to make burly cheir;
 When loud the wind was heard to sound,
 And an earthquake rock'd the floor.
 And darkness cover'd a' the hall,
 Where they sat at their meat;
 The grey dogs howling left their food
 And crept to Henrie's feet.
 And louder howl'd the rising wind,
 And burst the fasten'd door;
 And in there came a griesly ghost
 Stood stamping on the floor.'

l. 455. the spectre-hound. Scott quotes from Waldron's Description of the Isle of Man an amusing story of a soldier in Peel Castle, which was haunted by a ghostly large black spaniel named the *Mauthe Doog*, in the language of the country. A pot-valiant soldier followed it; a frightful noise was heard; and when the soldier came back, he was speechless, and after vainly trying to explain by signs what had happened to him, died in horrible convulsions.

l. 469. St. Bride of Douglas. 'This was a favourite saint of the house of Douglas, and of the Earl of Angus in particular, as we learn from the following passage:—"The Queen-Regent had proposed to raise a rival noble to the ducal dignity; and discoursing of

her purpose with Angus, he answered, 'Why not, madam? we are happy that have such a princess, that can know and will acknowledge men's services, and is willing to recompense it; but, by the might of God' (this was his oath when he was serious and in anger; at other times, it was by St. Bryde of Douglas), 'if he be a Duke, I will be a Drake!'—So she desisted from prosecuting of that purpose."—*Godscroft*, vol. ii. p. 131.—SCOTT.

APPENDIX.

THE annexed map shows the chief localities mentioned in the poem. They all lie within the limits of what may be called Scott-land, the land of the Scott clan. We have to go a little beyond the limits to the east to bring in Melrose Abbey and other places mentioned in the latter half of Deloraine's ride; and a little beyond them also to the south to bring in Hermitage. On the other hand, our map does not include the full extent of Scott territory in Eskdale on the south-west or Tweeddale on the north-east. But substantially the map justifies its title of Scott-land, representing that part of the broader Scotland which was specially dear to the author of the Lay.

Scott's own residences, just on the border of the cherished territory, are shown in the north-east corner of the map. The house of Ashestiel, to which he went from Lasswade in the summer before the Lay was published, does not appear, but the hill on whose northern slope by the banks of the Tweed it stands, is within our limits. Broadmeadows, on the opposite bank of the Yarrow to the ruins of Newark Castle, is marked, because at the date of the Lay, Scott contemplated the purchase of this farm. To this there is an allegoric allusion at the close of the poem—

‘Close beneath proud Newark’s tower
Arose the Minstrel’s lowly bower.’

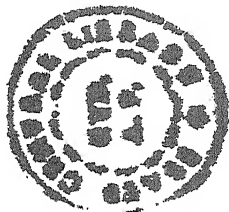
Broadmeadows, and not Abbotsford, would have been the place permanently associated with his name, the nucleus at least of his own bit of land within the territory of the clan, had he not, in an unlucky hour, decided to invest the purchase money in the printing business of Ballantyne & Co.

Deloraine's ride from Branksome, near the centre, to Melrose in the north-east corner, may be followed on our map. The scale of the map is four miles to the inch, and it will be seen that Scott's allowance of four hours between Hawick and Melrose is ample for the ride. But the weight of the rider and the roughness of the road may be pleaded in favour of the time assigned, if we are to be realistically exact. One of the features of Scott's manner is his realism in such matters. Before writing his description of Fitzjames's ride from Coilantogle Ford to Stirling, in the 'Lady of the Lake,' he rode over the same ground himself to make sure that it could be done in the time. There are one or two indications in his description of Deloraine's ride that he either trusted to general recollection of the route or did not care to be scrupulously realistic. The last is probably the right explanation, for Scott was familiar with every old tower and every road in this district for years before he wrote the Lay.

821.7

SCO THE END.

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MAP OF SCOTT-LAND

